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Is there a difference or is it just fabric?:
Implicit Cognition and the Headscarf

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**Is there a difference or is it just fabric?:
Implicit Cognition and the Headscarf**

by

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Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to every mind curious for knowledge. To everyone who values our efforts to improve the world and gain understanding through research. To every Muslim woman who struggled due to the wearing of the headscarf. To the inspiring field of research. And most importantly, to my parents who always prioritized my education and experience, and my husband, who patiently waited... and waited... and waited.

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Abstract

Is there a difference or is it just fabric?

Implicit Cognition and the Headscarf

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2016

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Abstract

The research presented in this paper offers preliminary findings of non-Muslim peers' perceptions of Muslim women, who wear the headscarf. To which degree does a piece of fabric illicit negative stereotypes of Muslim women? And how does it affect their non-Muslim peer's interaction with them? To investigate these question, a sample of 108 men and women from the undergraduate subject pool of a public university in Texas completed a survey comprising several scales to measure general stereotypes and perceptions of Muslim women, and qualitative reflections and responses to images and information provided. The most interesting and compelling general result is that though the majority of participants in my study professed egalitarian beliefs and passionately support Muslim women's constitutional rights, the headscarf still served as an implicit trigger for some degree of negative perception. Including tendency for socially desirable and Moderacy Response Style (MRS). Thus, I could assert that it is not simply fabric; the wearing of the headscarf seemed to impact the overall evaluation of the woman in a negative direction when compared to women not wearing the headscarf. Interestingly, the findings further suggest that clothing stereotypes, including the headscarf as a negative marker, and attractiveness play a role in first impression formation of Muslim women. I

found that having attractive facial features led to higher ratings on several positive attribute scales than were received by a less attractive person not wearing a headscarf. Finally, qualitative data indicated that style and color of the headscarf's fabric further affects perceptions. Many participants preferred lighter colored scarves that complemented the woman's complexion, and fashionable attire.

Keywords: Prejudice – Clothing Stereotypes – Implicit Cognition – Visual Literacy – Out Group – Color – Impression formation

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

We've all felt it, whether in a classroom or in some gathering when the question of Muslims, Arabs, or the headscarf (widely known as hijab) is brought up. We've felt it when negative/positive comments about the Middle East arise with a Muslim and/or an Arab in the room.

Awkward silence.

Hesitance.

Nobody wants to answer or comment, cheeks flush, they look away or wait for someone else to respond (internally hoping that a Muslim/Arab would answer and end the agony) ...because this conversation is just about to get uncomfortable, in fact it already has...

You've been there, right?

So had some students taking this survey.

Response action:
"Neutral" or "Skip question"

In this research, I explored non-Muslim students' perceptions, attitudes, knowledge and bias towards their female Muslim peers, and how the headscarf/face-veil or neither are interpreted and evaluated. I further explored how color and style of the headscarf might play a role in peers' evaluation of Muslim women. I first started with general perceptions of Muslim women compared to other faiths or no faith, and tested students' general knowledge and attitude towards laws and campus environment as it relates to those of Muslim faith. Finally, I challenged their perceptions by providing images that are contrary to mainstream media's portrayal of Muslim women, and collected their thoughts and reflections about the images as well as controversial media (cartoons, images, and video). More than anything, their thoughtful, sometimes negative and nuanced, written responses shed light on several issues and their

sources, further revealing a possible positive future in terms of young college students toward Muslim women.

Visual Culture

We live in a very visual culture. Imagery affects our everyday lives, it triggers our emotions (both positive and negative), sometimes it cuts deep into our souls. We connect with media stories and portrayals of different groups, but imagery also directly affects our political climate and the outcomes for many every day. Cultural and religious attire of Muslim women continues to be part of socio-political discussions by feminists, politicians, and researchers concerning the images portrayed of the “average Muslim woman.” These discussions have even taken part of public discourse on religious freedom, oppression, or desexualizing of women (see Karakasoglu, 2005). Muslim women who wear the headscarf are either seen as helpless, brainwashed, oppressed by male figures, and voiceless, or as violent, suicide bomb machines, and sometimes as not contributing very much to society (See Jonshon, 2012; Ahmed, 1992; Berkowitz, 2004; Hoodfar, 2001; Khatib, 2006; Shaheen, 2007; Tawil-Souri, 2007). These studies and discussions have prompted me to seek further understanding of how these images affect the evaluation and perceptions of Muslim women, as suggested, the “traditional Muslim clothing such as the hijab provides an interesting field for social psychologists because it allows fast and easy categorization” (Unkelch, Schneider, Gode, & Senft, 2010).



Figure 1: Media Portrayals of Muslim women

Images like these circulate in the media and internet, reducing Muslim women to garbage in some instances (figure 1, left). These images are taken from a certain country in a very specific context, then applied uniformly onto the entire population of Muslim women. “This is problematic not only because ‘universal oppression of women’ is being represented by a very specific culture, but also because extremely empowered Afghan women do in fact, exist.” (Veil Stereotypes: Constructing and distorting Muslim women, 2014). There are plenty of other images dehumanizing Muslim women’s body by equating them to bombs; making pregnancy, a symbol of life, no different than terrorism of innocent lives. By doing this, the world fails to acknowledge the full humanity of their being. Additionally, when people hear (or see) the word “hijab” or “Muslim women,” it elicits images of women covered from head to toe in black, wearing a face veil. A quick search on Google of “Muslim women” will provide similar images (see below), even though the type of woman depicted in these images is only representative of a small minority of Muslim women.

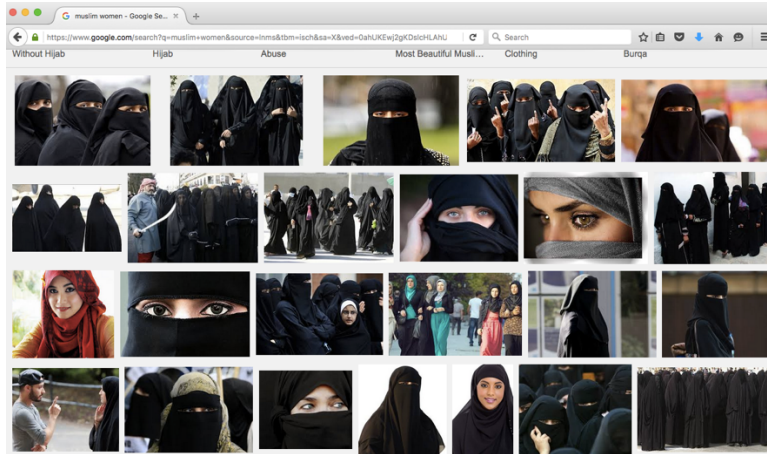


Figure 2: “Muslim women” on google

Negative stereotypes have developed, in part due to media bias and inaccurate portrayal of Muslims based on a small fraction of the population. The current political climate has shaped perceptions of Muslim women around the world, and in turn this climate has affected these Muslim women’s experiences and outcomes in terms of employability, work environment, education, social life, and self view. This effect has been investigated and reported on by researchers and reporters around the world, as I discuss in the next chapter. The meaning and consequences of how a Muslim woman dresses has been controversial, and essentially, has stood in the way of these women being known for who they are instead of the stereotypes the perceiver projects onto them. The overarching question for this project was how have these images shaped the perceptions of non-Muslims, and to what extent.

Using non-Muslim students’ written and survey responses, I address the generalizations and stereotypes of Muslim women, and how these prejudices and implicit biases can be triggered by clothing stereotypes, with the headscarf as a religious marker. In conducting my research, I sought to consider how and why these perceptions arise from the student’s perspective, collecting qualitative data through short-answer format of student reflections and explanations as to what these views are and why they hold them. I further sought to consider if images depicting

differences in race, level of beauty, and style of Muslim women may affect the non-Muslim students' perceptions. I identified measures for variability in how comfortable someone may feel around, and how negatively he/she perceives, different women wearing the headscarf or face veil compared to women not wearing the headscarf. In addition, to understand further the general perceptions of Muslim women by non-Muslim peers, I challenged them with new information and collected their reactions. I further sought to investigate how variations of the level of modesty, headscarf color/style, facial features (eye color, skin tone, etc. – evaluations of beauty), and fashion sense together have implications on the overall evaluation of Muslim women.

My hope was this study would further add to the progress made in the field of psychology on perceptions of Muslim women and clothing stereotypes. I hoped it would provide an interesting area to understanding the variations in perception that give rise to possible stereotypic thinking and discrepancy in levels of comfort towards Muslim women wearing the headscarf. Unlike other research on color and clothing stereotypes, I expected the color black to have negative connotations as it pertains to Muslim women, rather than connoting as it often does professionalism or sexiness. For example, I wanted to investigate whether a Muslim woman wearing a suit with a headscarf as compared to a Muslim woman wearing a black face-veil would be seen as less oppressed, even though the overall evaluation would be negative compared to someone not wearing a headscarf. Finally, I wanted to test whether, even in the face of negative stereotypes attached to the headscarf and some attire worn by Muslim women, the way in which a Muslim woman presents herself, along with facial features, would affect how the perceiver evaluates her. I hypothesized that though there are negative stereotypes of Muslim women, students react differently to the various ways Muslim women dress and look.

These above factors, and missing pieces within the research about Muslim women, motivated this research. By further understanding connections between non-Muslims' implicit perceptions and the headscarf, I hoped to contribute to a better understanding of the implications of the perceiver's view of women who wear the headscarf. Does a mere piece of fabric elicit negative perceptions, and to what extent does the level of coverage and color of fabric influence the stigma and trigger implicit thought and images? In sum, is there a difference or is it just fabric? The outcomes may be generalizable to other populations that are seen as out-groups and face stigma/prejudice based on race or ethnic/religious clothing.

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to add to the literature on prejudice and clothing stereotypes towards Muslim women by their non-Muslim peers. As mentioned in the introduction, discrimination against Muslims is a persisting problem. Knowing more about what cues can cause discriminatory attitudes has implications for the media, the public, researchers and social organizations, and Muslim women. Also, knowing whether college students in the year 2015 harbor these attitudes and perceptions can guide public policy and intervention strategies.

Research Questions

1. What are the general perceptions of non-Muslims towards Muslim women? Do these students hold negative stereotypes and prejudicial thinking?
2. What affects their impression and evaluation of Muslim women (level of modestly, style, color, race, personal beliefs)?
3. How do students respond to positive images of Muslim women from diverse background and multiple fields of work? Many do not believe that Muslim women work or participate in

political, social, athletic, or even creative contexts, so it was of interest to collect students' reactions to images that are contrary to what they see in mainstream media.

4. How do they reflect on and analyze information that may be controversial, as it relates to Muslim women?

These were all questions that helped me in understanding non-Muslim college students' perceptions and attitudes towards this subject in a holistic way, with the goal of establishing a baseline for further qualitative and quantitative studies on perceptions of Muslim women as these pertain to how they dress.

Research Difficulties

Before delving into the existing literature (Chapter 2), data gathering and data analysis methods (Chapter 3), findings (Chapter 4), and discussion (Chapter 5), I need to begin by addressing unusual difficulties I encountered in conducting this research. First, my research was hindered due to the sensitivity of the human subject review staff (IRB) requesting that my survey's title be more explicit, which would give away the task in the first section of the survey, "The IRB member requested that you provide scientific justification as to how disclosure of the true purpose of the study and complete study title would affect the study design and research questions/hypotheses with regard to the online survey condition." Many other unusual constraints and requests were placed, as well as requesting unnecessary clarity in the consent form. In a second round, IRB staff members then requested I return to some of the original wording after I had made the requested changes, creating unnecessary delays. These delays caused me to miss the subject-pool deadline, which was later extended. I ended up beginning to administer the survey one month later, by which time, most students had completed their subject pool requirement through other studies. My focus group activity was also very concerning to the

board, calling it “deceptive,” even though I had said that students would be informed that the focus group would be about religious wear. A focus group with 24 individuals from the same population was initially set for me to collect data and perceptions in discussion form, including several direct and indirect activities to test biases and perceptions. However, due to institutional delays, many students did not participate, and the five who did cancel on the day of the focus group.

I offer that this disapproval of my research topic and the difficulties I encountered in attracting students to the topic suggest that the fear of offending potential college students’ sensibilities had a basis in reality, and simply supports the need for this type of study, necessary yet difficult to conduct.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

In this review, I will start with a general overview of stereotypes and the implicit cognitive factors that contribute to generalizations and impressions formation. Then I will focus on research studying these factors as they pertain to Muslim women, and finally lightly discuss literature on clothing stereotypes and color association, and necessary research in the field in relation to the headscarf.

Social cognition research on stereotypes and implicit memory emphasize the cognitive and motivational factors that contribute to stereotype formation, maintenance, application, and change (Hilton & Hoppel, 1996), and prove that it only takes a few images or occurrences for a person to make a category-wide generalization about a group. As researchers found increased difficulty in detecting explicit notions of prejudice, many sought different measures to detect implicit stereotypes and forms of prejudice. Implicit stereotypes were first described as an aspect of implicit social cognition: the phenomenon that perceptions, attitudes, and stereotypes operate without conscious intention (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995), and may lead to prejudicial thinking. Prejudice, in the late 90s, was defined by Gordon Allport as “an antipathy based on faulty and inflexible generalization. It may be felt or expressed. It may be directed toward an individual as a whole, or toward an individual because he is a member of that group” (1954, p.10), later Johns (1997) modified the definition to assert that this prejudgment can either be negative or positive, affective or cognitive due to group membership. While trying to detect ethnic prejudice or stereotyping in research, Kruglanski and Freund (1983) found that imposing time pressure on a judgment task increased the level of ethnic stereotyping in subject judgments. Gilbert and Hixon (1991) used a distracting memory load to reduce intentional resources available for a word-

completion task that was used as an indicator of ethnic stereotyping. They found increased evidence of stereotyping on the indirect measure. Researchers have effectively documented the categorization phenomenon and the implicit aspect of stereotypes (Banaji & Greenwald, in press; Bargh, 1994; Devine, 1989; Dovidio, Evans, & Tyler, 1986; Fiske, 1989; Geis, 1993; Gilbert & Hixon, 1991; Hamilton & Sherman, 1994; Perdue & Gurtman, 1990), they further have proven it is possible to obtain measures of prejudice and stereotyping outside of the individual's control and awareness through studies on the influence of stereotypes on decisions to shoot (e.g. see Wittenbrink, Judd, & Park, 2001). Many other measures were developed to test prejudicial attitudes, like the Implicit Attitudes Test (IAT; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998) all of which look at words and symbols associated with different groups.

Simply put, implicit (and explicit) stereotypes are overgeneralizations about attributes of group and are sometimes incorrect, even on average, “a strikingly negative action on behalf of a few members of a racial, ethnic, or religious minority (or “out-group”) may lead us to a general belief concerning their entire group” (Leslie, 2001). Studies have shown that once stereotypes are formed they act as cognitive schemas when processing information or images and forming first impression, and generally produce noticeable in-group/out-group biases (Hogg 2003; Tajfel 1982). For example, while forming an impression of someone wearing a headscarf, implicit notions stored in our memory are retrieved when seeing a Muslim woman in a headscarf, or any racial/clothing marker related to Muslims/Muslim women. These generalizations may lead to prejudice, underserved negative (or positive) attitudes towards out-groups (or in-group), and possibly discrimination, an action based on prejudices and stereotypes of these groups. In the simplest of ways, prejudice and stereotypes could prohibit a social interaction, that is otherwise possible.

A wide range of characteristics are considered when forming a first impression: race, physical appearance, clothing style, gender, and implicit stereotypes. These first impressions could influence treatment and view of the individual(s), and only takes one-tenth of a second for the judgment and first impression to form (Willis & Todorov, 2006). Previous research suggests that a major determinant of prejudice, discrimination, and violence towards Muslims is based on the degree to which the individual is visibly identifiable as such (King & Ahmad, 2010, p.886). Unfortunately, western media outlets spread a very specific and negative image of Muslim women using the headscarf, and more specifically, the face veil as a marker. These images were found to perpetuate racial stereotypes and generalize the Muslim population in a very narrow negative perspective. Studies on racial and religious prejudice document how the media regularly prints the words “Islam” and “Muslim” next to words like “fanatic,” “oppressive”, “terrorist” and other negative verbal and visual portrayals. A comparable study found that the film industry was reported to have over 900 films portrayed Arab (Muslim) men as “murders”, “rapists”, “religious fanatics” and “abusers of women” (Shaheen 2003), those are other than the recent controversial movie “American Sniper”. These portrayals vilify Muslims and are one way of othering them. Though some of documented research is of Arabs, they equally affect perceptions of Muslims, as it has been well established that Arabs and Muslim are commonly and improperly understood to be synonymous (e.g., Erickson & Al-Timimi, 2001).

Research found that not only does the “hijab” allow for faster and easier categorization, but through this process the activation of possible negative stereotypes and prejudice is more prevalent (Unkelbach, Schneider, Gode, and Senft, 2010; Saroglou et al, 2009). In recent studies in Germany they found that the headscarf is indeed closely associated with the concept of the average Muslim woman (Unkelback et al., 2010). Participants were asked to imagine a typical

Muslim woman and write what physical features this woman has, 86% mentioned the headscarf and 65% mentioned dark skin or hair. It was problematic being that they further found that the headscarf led to higher rejection rates, women wearing headscarves were more likely rejected compared to the identical women appearing as another applicant without the headscarf. These studies suggest that the imagery created by the media affects everyday interactions with Muslims and their outcomes, due to negative media portrayals of their faith. In addition, other research regards negative perceptions of Muslim women analyze and compare views on wearing the veil (Wagner 2012), including Muslim gender identity discourse (Ghazal, Bartkowski 2000), ideology and society, as well as the negative influence of stereotypes on the quality of life and opportunities for Muslims who are easily identified.

Literature further discusses skin tone affects on prejudice against Muslims and Arabs, and other minorities in western nations. Findings by Brown et al. (2013) suggest that skin color and clothing (or cues of foreignness) are key factors in forming first impressions and categorizations of others. In the study, cues of foreignness (dress and name) were found to be stronger predictors of prejudice than phenotype (complexion). Several other studies support the idea of skin color and clothing's affect on the evaluation of the individuals. These studies suggest that stereotypes may lead to discriminatory behavior and affect the overall perceptions of self and others (See Brown et al, 2013; Banerjee, 2004; de Man, & Stout, 2006; Hannover & Kuhnen, 2002; Judd, Bull, & Gahagan, 1975; Sani & Thompson, 2001; Stangor et al., 1992; Unkelbach, Forgas, & Denson, 2008). In addition to research on general negative stereotypes against Muslims, Pew polls reported that Conservatives tend to be twice as likely as Liberals to be prejudiced towards Muslims and Arabs (Pew Research Center, 2010). Similarly, a recent study found that Americans high in Right Wing Authoritarianism (RWA) view Muslims as

threatening traditional American norms and perceive the military action in predominantly Muslim nations as indicating approval by the U.S. government for aggression toward Muslims (Beck, 2015). RWA is an attitudinal construct (along with SDO –Social Dominance Orientation) that accounts for a majority of group prejudice due to conservative political identity. Across three studies, Beck found consistently found RWA is associated with negative attitudes and hostile behavior toward Muslims.

Research on affects of wearing the headscarf in educational context found “those who wear hijab are immediately more recognizable in the university as Muslims, and thus more vulnerable to racialized and gendered stereotyping” (Tyrrer & Ahmad 2006). In this study, a significant number of accounts highlighted experiences of anti-Muslim racism linked to the “hijab”, which was seen by some respondents to mark women who wear hijab as “alien, non-liberal, or oppressed in the eyes of racists” (Tyrrer & Ahmad 2006). Findings are further support by Everett et al. (2015) that any Muslim veil was associated with less favorable implicit associations than no veil, (also see El-Geledi & Bourhis, 2012; Saroglou et al., 2009). Another line of research among U.S. college students reporting that prejudice towards Muslims was related to perceived threats to national values (Hitlan, Carrillo, Zarate, & Aikman, 2007), and perceptions of Muslims as desecrators of Christianity were associated with prejudice toward Muslims and perceived conflict with Muslims (Oswald, 2005; Abu Raiya, Pragament, Mahoney, & Trevino, 2008).

A new line of research looks at both subtle and overt forms of micro-aggressions towards American Muslims and how it affects its victims. These studies have found that the process of encountering racial micro-aggressions can be psychologically and physically draining, often to leading to higher levels of stress and poor mental health outcomes (Nadal, Wong, et al., 2011;

Rivera, Forquer, & Rangel, 2010; Sue, Bucceri, Lin, Nadal, & Torino, 2007; Sue, Capodilupo, & Holder, 2008; Sue, Nadal, Capodilupo, Lin, Torino, & Rivera, 2008). Targets are left angry and confused, “often wondering if race was involved in an interaction, or whether or not to confront the perpetrator” (Nadal et al, 2012). Moreover, most of these micro-aggressions are triggered by noticeable “Muslim” markers, like the headscarf worn by a Muslim woman, an Arabic name, and Middle Eastern complexion or facial features. Other reports supporting these findings show that Muslim women are more likely to be subjected to attacks and micro-aggressions than men, and the likelihood is increased if they are wearing the full-face veil or other clothing associated with Islam (Allen, 2013). Unfortunately, negative portrayals have adversely shaped the image of Arabs and Muslims alike in minds of many impressionable non-Muslims. A recent report suggests that overt discrimination and prejudice towards Muslim Americans is still considered acceptable (Awad and Amayreh 2016). There are numerous other studies on clothing stereotypes and how women or ethnic minorities are evaluated differently based on style, level of modesty, brand and color selection. They further look at the outcomes for many in terms of employability, approachability, attractiveness, and a myriad of other factors.

General clothing stereotype research investigates the influence of clothing style on impression formation, most research support significant effects due to style and level of modesty, as well as interactions with race and gender (see Mcdermott & Pettijohn, 2011). Research on clothing stereotypes and race found that participants wanted to befriend African American model least when wearing a brand name sweatshirt, and friend the Caucasian model least when in a Kmart sweatshirt. Moreover, the African American model was rated less favorably than the Caucasian model overall (in a plain shirt, brand shirt, and Kmart shirt) on dimensions of success, intelligence, and attractiveness (Mcdermott & Pettijohn, 2011). Other research by Gille-Knauf

and Mittag (2008) found that a female dressed provocatively in a female-dominated major was perceived as significantly less intelligent than when attributed to a male dominated major. In that study, females who dress provocatively in their female-dominated roles were seen as less intelligent, so “to succeed in a female-dominated profession, one would need to conform to the expected conservative dress” (p.g. 1). In another study examining the effect of clothing style on high school success ratings, students and teachers rated formally dressed female models as more intelligent with higher perceived level of achieved education than more casually dressed models (Behling & Williams, 1991). A few other studies found that models in provocative clothing were taken less seriously yet judged as more attractive and assertive (Cahoon & Edmonds, 1989; Edmonds, Cahoon, & Hudson, 1992). Supporting these findings are those of Glick, Larsen, Johnson, and Brenstiter (2005), where a female who is dressed in a sexy manner in a high status, managerial position is perceived as significantly less competent and intelligent than a conservatively dressed female in the same position. Yet modesty as it pertains to Muslims is not evaluated as positively as the former studies.

A recent study considered the affect of different levels of modest wear on explicit and implicit biases toward Muslim women (Everette et al., 2015), reported more negatively towards any veil (headscarf or face veil) compared with no veil, and more negatively towards full head/face veil relative to the headscarf. Everette showed images of a woman without a headscarf, with a headscarf, and then with a full-face veil (niqab) to test the effect of the veil. A study by Mahmud and Swami (2010) found that “women wearing the hijab were rated by Muslim and non-Muslim men in Britain as less attractive and less intelligent than women not wearing hijab”. Another study found that Muslim women in the US who wear hijab have lower expectations of receiving job offers, especially with jobs requiring high levels of public contact (Ghumman &

Ryan, 2013). On the other hand, some research claims that Muslim Americans in general tend to be more educated and more financially wealthy, as well as younger, than the general American population (Bukhari & Strum, 2003).

Previous studies considered the cognitive implicit perceptions of wearing veils and how it affects outcomes, but did not include how the colors of Muslim women's headscarves may affect perceptions of their non-Muslim peers. The associations made with color and style may lead to different perceptions of the women. According to research on color association, a color preference for particular objects or settings is dependent upon the situation and the underlying associations people may have developed (Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999). Therefore, it may be that subtle differences between the wearer and the images portrayed of her have different affects on the perceiver. Studies on clothing color also indicate that color has a psychological influence on the wearers and raters, and that this influences attractiveness judgment by others (Roberts, Own, Havlicek, 2010). Findings suggest that both red and black are associated with higher attractiveness judgments (Roberts, Own, Havlicek, 2010), and further suggests that color association can bias interpersonal judgments. This may be ignored when fear or racial stereotypes are at play, in the context of Muslim women. For example, the findings from different color studies (Walsh et al, 1990; Scanlon, 1985; Holmes and Buchanan, 1984; Mundell, 1993) suggest that preferences for colors in particular contexts may be culturally determined or based on associations people learn and develop from a certain context. This could mean that certain fabric colors may be preferred over others as they pertain to the wearing of the headscarf in western societies (further discussion in Results).

CHAPTER 3

Method

This study investigated the negative perceptions held by non-Muslim peers towards Muslim women who wear the headscarf, beginning with simple and general perceptions of Muslim women in comparison to women of other faiths, then moving to more complex thoughts and beliefs. I tested student knowledge and attitudes towards Muslim women, and Muslims in general and looked into response approach toward stereotypically negative statements about Muslims. I then advanced the investigation to whether the headscarf and modest attire worn by some Muslims affect level of comfort and perceptions of intelligence, independence, oppression, beauty, and violence in comparison to women who do not wear the headscarf, or those who choose to wear the face veil. Research has already shown that there is negative affect towards Muslim women wearing the headscarf (Everette et al., 2015), I testing whether if there would be a difference in perceptions of Muslim women who wear the headscarf.

The study further investigated if there are any confounding factors like skin-tone, facial features, and eye color that affect perceptions and ratings of the women in the images, by putting an image of an above average looking woman wearing the headscarf versus a normal looking woman. Similarly, I looked at ratings of white, Asian, Middle Eastern, Hispanic, and Black women wearing the headscarf versus not wearing the headscarf.

In a final section I exposed students to positive images of Muslim women. Because the media is often focused on the negative anomalies, providing positive images of Muslim women, I hoped to opened the way for conceptual change through visual literacy and a different narrative of what the students are used to seeing and hearing as a space where they can reflect. My

question was whether they perceived these women as representative of the Muslim population or did they see them as the exception to the rule.

Descriptive and qualitative data were collected to describe the non-Muslim peers' view of Muslim women.

Participant

A total of 108 students participated in the online survey. They represented five racial categories: White, Hispanic, Asian, Black, and Mixed. There were a total of 43 students who identified as White, 27 as Hispanic, 7 as Black, and 7 from Mixed background. One student from the second wave of data gathering, Group 2 (n=52), did not fill in the Ethnic/Racial background question.

Group	Race					Totals
	White	Hispanic	Asian	Black	Mix	
0	11	10	7	1	2	31
1	10	5	7	2	1	25
2	22	12	9	4	4	51
Total	43	27	23	7	7	107

Table 1: Race distribution

The survey did not allow Muslims to participate, as I was seeking perceptions of non-Muslims. Students who participated in the survey were from the following faiths (or no faith): Christian, Jewish, Agnostic/Atheist, and other. There were a total of 70 Christians, 4 Jews, 26 Agnostics/Atheists, and 6 participants who identified in a religion other than the main three. Again, one student from Group 2 did not fill in the religious background question.

Group	Religions				Totals
	Christian	Jewish	Agnostic/Atheist	Other	
0	23	1	6	1	31
1	25	1	6	3	25
2	32	2	24	2	51
Total	70	4	26	6	106

Table 2: Faith distribution

Participants were fulfilling a course requirement that mandates subject pool participation through their involvement in one hour sessions, and received 1-1.5 research credit. Students did not receive any other compensation for their participation in the study's survey. The sample consisted of non-Muslim students to measure perceptions of Muslim women that wear the headscarf/veil/hijab. Exclusionary criteria for the study was that students who came from a Muslim background were not able to participate.

In addition to the online survey, there was a focus group, however due to IRB approval delays, and two weeks left for the subject pool end date, it was hard to get any participants to partake in the focus group. Only 5 students signed up for the focus groups, all of which had canceled their participation.

Design & Procedure

Students in the Educational Psychology subject pool (EDP subject pool) were recruited to participate in the online survey investigating participants' general perceptions of Muslim women who wear the headscarf and how they compare to women from other faiths or no faith. Survey was given using Qualtrics and students were recruited through SONA system. Further, how a woman without a headscarf compare to a women wearing a headscarf or full face veil from different ethnic/racial backgrounds.

Measures

The survey was comprised of six sections with several qualitative and quantitative measures to evaluate student perceptions and possible stereotypes: Section I – Participants Views of Traits of Women of Different Faiths, where participants rated the 4 categories of women from different faiths on 6 different scales; Section II – Views of Campus Environments Relative to Muslim Students, where participants answered 7 open-ended questions about campus

environment as it relates to Muslims/Muslim women; Section III – Muslim Women Prejudice Scale, where participants rated whether they agree or disagree with 27 statements about Muslim women in relation to their faith; Section IV – Participants Political Views Relative to Muslims, participants answered 6 questions pertaining to their political views and Muslims in political context today; Section V – Scarf/No Scarf Image Rating, participants rated 16 images of women from different racial backgrounds with/without a headscarf on 8 scales; Section VI – Reflections, participants answered 8 open-ended questions to cartoons, images, or information given to see how they reflect or interpret the information in the images. Subjects further viewed a list of images of Muslim women that wear the headscarf in athletics, creative, government and other roles, images of women that are not usually advertised and shown in the mainstream media. Students were asked to reflect on whether the women seemed oppressed and if the images were surprising. Lastly, students were asked to give feedback about the survey and their comfort level taking the survey.

Due to the length of the survey and results section, each measure's detailed description will be provided in the Results under Description of each survey section (Chapter 4).

CHAPTER 4

Results

The survey was comprised of six sections, as mentioned before, and I present the results section by section. For each section, I start with descriptive results, present comparison data (both using statistical analyses and proportional data), give a brief summary, and end with a discussion of how the survey would need to be changed to address the issue central to each section of the survey. Before addressing the first section, however, I discuss some general methodological issues I encountered.

Methodological Issues

Because the general focus of my thesis is on perceptions of Muslim women who wear the headscarf by their non-Muslim peers, a portion of the first section of the survey is not included here as it pertains to Muslim men.

Initially, there was only one group of participants in my study (Group 0), and for these students, the entire survey was available all at once, rather than question-by-question. Upon a preliminary check of the data, I noticed that students seemed to avoid either extreme ends of the scales and to leave blank some of the questions. I conjectured that perhaps a response bias was affecting the students such that they felt they could not answer honestly as they went through the survey. To avoid consequences of students changing answers after seeing other sections, two other groups were created, only seeing question by question. The initial survey was split between Groups 1 and 2, with Group 1 answering certain sections of the survey and Group 2 answering other sections. I chose to do this because I also saw in Group 0 that they seemed to become tired as the survey continued. I decided that shortening the survey would be better and would allow me to compare these groups to the original group (Group 0). Any student who participated in the

initial survey was not allowed to participate in the new versions of the survey. As it turned out, there were no significant differences due to Group (0, 1, 2) in all sections of the survey, during the analysis. Thus, I decided to combine all groups for any one section.

The study was originally set to explore general perception held by non-Muslims towards their female Muslim peers who wear the scarf, as well as how perceptions change when pictures show the same face without the headscarf. I looked for differences due to a participant's race, but not religion as the distribution among the different religions was too restricted to conduct any statistical testing (too few participants of non-Christian faith).

Section I – Participants' Views of Traits of Women of Different Faiths

Description

The first section explores participants' views of Muslim women when compared to their perceptions of women from other religious, or non-religious, background on six scales. The six scales were used to rate the following four categories of women: Jewish, Christian, Muslim, and Agnostic/Atheist. A 7-point Likert scale was created for each item: (1) Peaceful – (7) Violent; (1) Trustworthy vs (7) Untrustworthy; (1) Intelligent vs (7) Unintelligent; (1) Honest vs (7) Devious; (1) Devout vs (7) Apathetic, and (1) Not Oppressed vs (7) Oppressed. Students were asked to: "Rate the degree to which a woman who is [religion] would fall on each continuum." Each scale served as an item, for a total number of items of 24. Group 0 and 1 (n=56) participated in this section of the survey.

Ratings were divided into 3 groups: Positive (ratings 1-3), Neutral (4), and negative (ratings 5-7). This provides aggregate scores to allow me to understand the participants' response approach and to obtain overall ratings for the four categories of women.

Response Approach

Other than the initial set of participants who dropped out after answering the items pertaining to the Christian category and reaching the items pertaining to the Muslim category, two participants skipped at least one item in this section. For this section, the mode was critical to my understanding of students' response approach. When looking at overall results, the mode determined that most students preferred to remain neutral as opposed to taking either a positive or negative stand on each scale (see tables in Appendix A). Ratings of 4, reflecting neutrality, were the most frequently selected number on all scales for this section. Also, participants reflected another form of neutrality by answering questions similarly for all categories of women. This tendency to create the same pattern of answers for all categories is another way to reflect neutrality.

Although there were no significant differences due to Group membership in SPSS, the results did indicate interesting proportional differences in how the four categories of women were rated in Group 0 versus Group 1. In general, participants rated more neutrally when seeing the entire survey at once, Group 0, and more positively when seeing the survey question by question Group 1. In addition, overall negative ratings also increased in Group 1 in relation to Group 0.

Group	Christian	Muslim	Jewish	Atheist/Agnostic
0	47.31 %	45.34 %	43.78 %	53.76 %
1	28.67 %	34.00 %	29.33 %	24.00 %

Table 3: Section I - Overall drop in neutral ratings for each category of women

There was a noticeable difference in participant's neutrality between Group 0 and 1 where neutrality dropped by 30-50% or more on average for all categories, with very few exceptions (Tables for each scale are provided in Appendix A). This occurred after adjusting the survey to show items question-by-question.

It may be that seeing the survey all at once encouraged students to remain more neutral when knowing they would be asked to rate different groups of people, than seeing the survey displayed question-by-question when they were still unsure of the entire task. Further support for this idea came from reviewing an interesting pattern of neutrality. Of the 56 students participating, nine students selected 4 (neutral) on all scales for all categories, seven of whom were from Group 0 (31 students), and only two were from Group 1 (25 students). Another interesting form of neutrality was seen in patterns of copying the ratings in the first category (Christian woman) onto other categories, several students used this method.

Again, though there were no significant outcomes due to Group, it may be that seeing the survey all at once enjoined students to remain more neutral when knowing they would be rating different groups of people, than seeing question-by-question. Nevertheless, because none of these differences were statistically significant, Group 0 and 1's totals for all scales were combined in the proportional data provided.

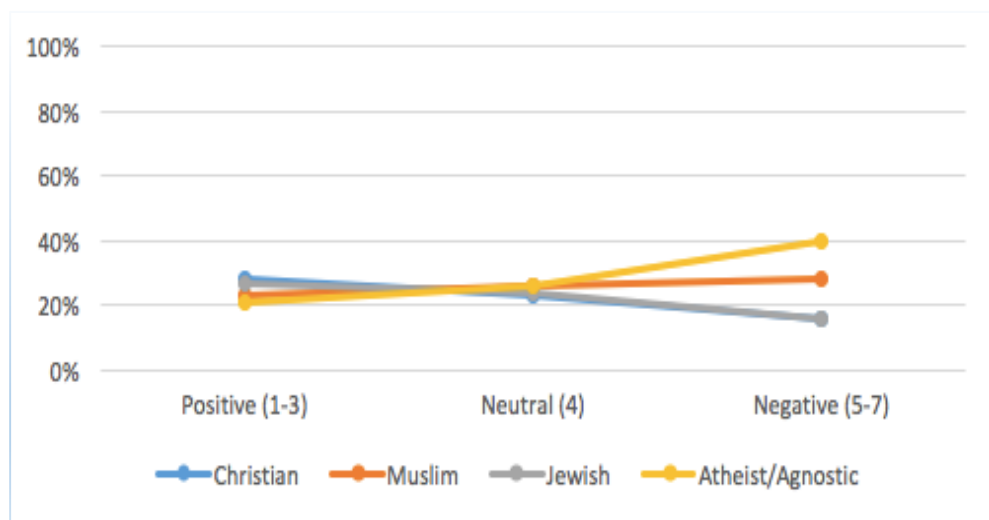


Figure 3: Aggregated Ratings for Each Category

After combining all six scales, findings revealed that participants rated the Atheists/Agnostics category with the least positive ratings (21%), followed by Muslims (23%);

whereas the highest positive ratings were received by the Christian (28%) category and followed by Jews (27%). Looking at how positive, negative, and neutral ratings were distributed tells us about participants' tendencies in their response approach. Many students remained neutral on all scales, almost equal to that of the percentage of those using the positive end of the scales. However, as can be seen in the figure, of the participants who used negative ratings on the scale, there was a greater proportional difference in the negative ratings for the four categories of women. Where Atheists/Agnostics received the most negative ratings (40%), followed by Muslims (28%), Jews and Christians received the least and equal amount of negative ratings (16%).

In general, the atheists/agnostic category was rated more negatively on all scales, followed by Muslims, while Christians and Jews were rated more positively (See figures providing breakdown for each scale in Appendix A). The mode for all scales was 4, which means students were more inclined to stay neutral, with 35-50% of participants rated neutrally for each scale (check table in Appendix A for each scale).

Based on participants' response approach, overall perceptions of Muslim women as they compare to women of other faiths were negative, but as they compare to those of no faith they were positive.

Results of Statistical Analysis

The ratings of the four categories of women were analyzed scale by scale using a repeated measures ANOVA to see if there were significant differences in how participants rated women from the different faith/no faith backgrounds. The model included the following variables: Group membership (to test for group differences), and Race, participants' racial background, to test if there were significant differences between groups and participants' racial

background. There were no interactions with Group or Racial background, further there were no significant between group differences due to Group membership or participant's Racial background on student responses on all six scales. This may be due to the relatively small sample size. Thus, a larger investigation may yield significant differences among race, and even religious background, if I could have large enough representations of students from different religions participating.

There were significant within subject differences for the four categories of women on several scales. The Honest versus Devious scale, $F(2.04,150)=3.14, p=.047, \eta^2=0.059$, was barely significant. Because the p -value is close to .05, due to Bonferroni adjustment, the differences are not evident in the post-hoc pairwise comparisons, where it is evident there is some difference close to significance between Christian and Atheist/Agnostic categories, but does not appear significant ($p=.272$). The estimated marginal means table shows that Atheists ($M=3.41, SD=0.26$) were rated as considerably more devious than Christians ($M=2.73, SD=0.24$). Using LSD adjustment may reveal differences, but they are so minor that they may be due to chance. A larger sample size may yield better results. However, by looking at the estimated means, it is evident that Atheists were rated highest, therefore more negatively, followed by Muslims, then Jews, and finally Christians.

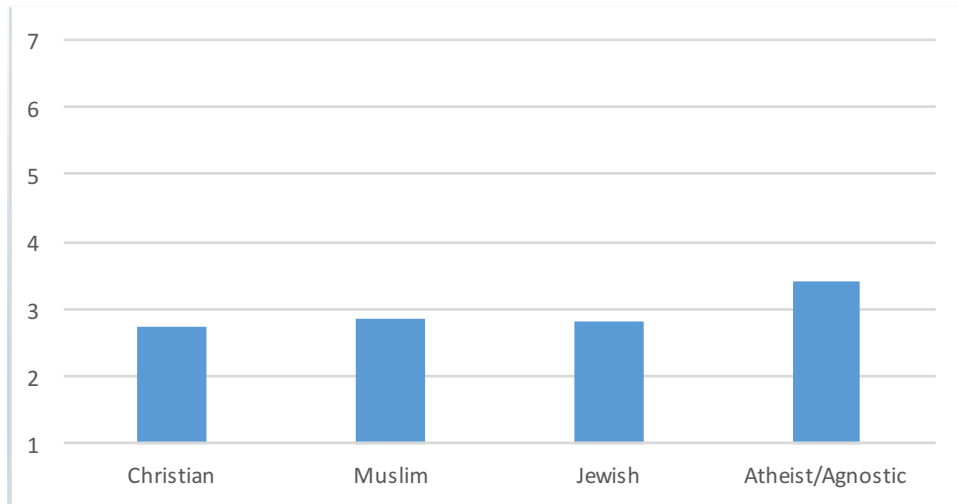


Figure 4: Honest versus Devious Scale Means

As for the Devout versus Apathetic Scale, $F(1.57,150)=14.78, p<.001, \eta^2=0.23$, there were significant differences in how participants rated the four categories of women. Pairwise comparison revealed significant differences in how Atheist/Agnostic women were rated in comparison to Christian women, $p<.001$, as well as in comparison to Muslim women, $p=.001$, and finally Jewish women, $p=.003$. Atheist/Agnostic women ($M=4.57, SD=0.36$) were seen as significantly more apathetic than other categories. Whereas Christian women ($M=2.61, SD=0.22$), Muslim women ($M=2.37, SD=.29$), and Jewish women ($M=2.93, SD=.36$) were rated as more devout. Keep in mind that the sample is a Christian majority.

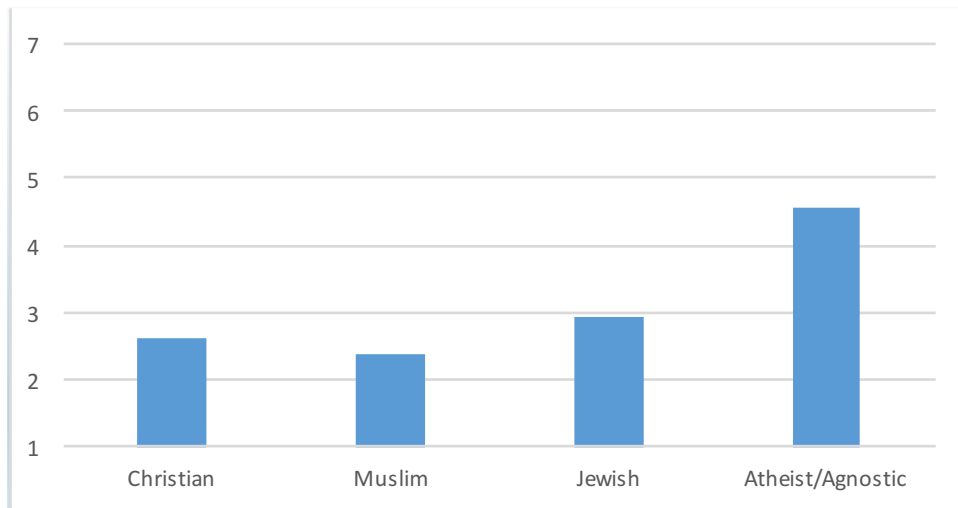


Figure 5: Devout versus Apathetic Scale Means

Finally, for the Unoppressed versus Oppressed Scale, $F(3,147)=9.33, p=.000, \eta^2=.16$, there were significant differences in how participants perceived levels of oppression as it relates to the four categories of women. Pairwise comparison revealed significance between Muslim women and Christian women, $p=.015$, as well as between Muslim women and Jewish women, $p=.001$, and Muslim women and Atheist/Agnostic women, $p=.001$. Muslim women were rated significantly higher on the scale ($M=4.76, SD=.29$), and perceived as more oppressed, whereas Christians ($M=3.69, SD=.30$), Jews ($M=3.33, SD=.27$), and Atheists/Agnostics ($M=2.90, SD=.32$) were rated as more unoppressed. Interestingly, Christian women were second in perceived level of oppression when compared to Jews and Atheists/Agnostics.

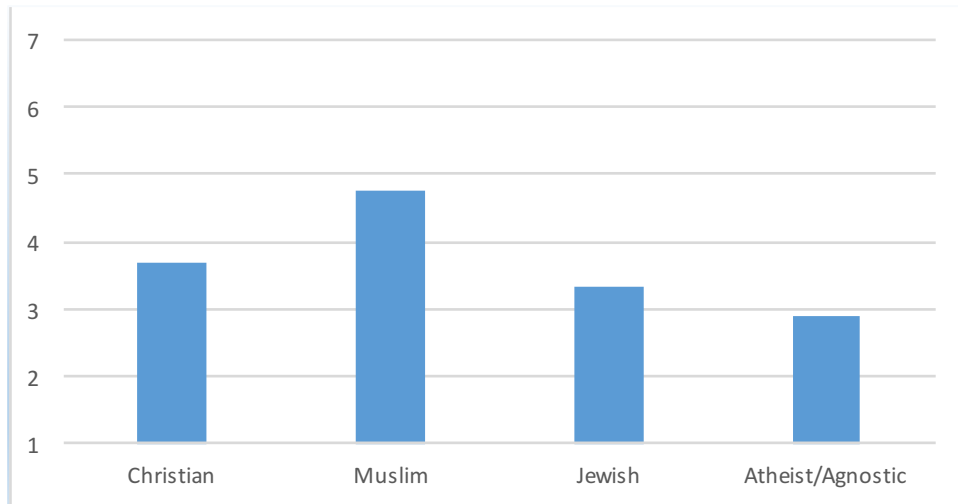


Figure 6: Unoppressed versus Oppressed Scale Means

Summary and Future Changes

Below is a figure of the overall estimated marginal means for each category of women, where participants rated Atheist/Agnostic women on average highest, more negatively. across all scales, followed by Muslims, then Christians, and finally Jewish women. When considering that by definition Atheists/Agnostics are more apathetic, therefore excluding the Devout-Apathetic scale, then Muslim women are overall rated most negatively, followed by Atheists, Christians, then Jews.

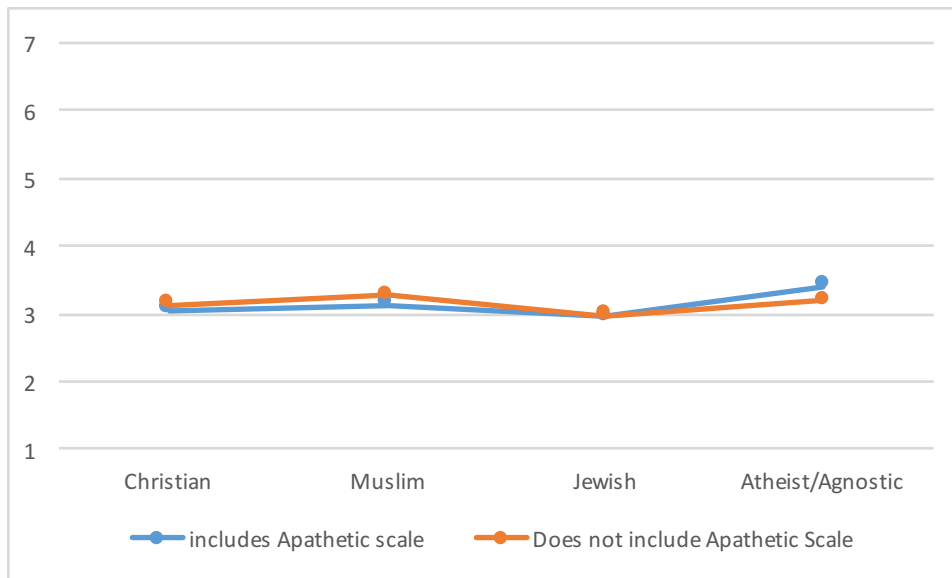


Figure 7: Average ratings for each category across all scales (with/without Devout-Apathetic Scale)

It is worth considering the background of participants when reviewing ratings, with a Christian majority (48 out of 56 participants in this section), only two Jewish participants, 12 Atheists/Agnostics, and 4 “other.” Indicating that perhaps students rated their own faith more positively, and with a majority, it affects overall ratings for the Christian women category versus other categories. Yet, it was interesting to see the Unoppressed-Oppressed Scale, Christian women were rated second highest, after Muslims, indicating that a good portion of participants from the Christian background, along with participants from other backgrounds, rated themselves as more oppressed than Jews and Atheists/Agnostics. Furthermore, for the Devout-Apathetic Scale, Christian women were seen as less devout than Muslim women, and Muslim women were rated as more devout than all other categories. For the Violent Scale, although there were no significant differences, Christian women were rated as less peaceful than Muslims and Jews, but more peaceful than Atheist/Agnostic women (figures for each scale provided in Appendix A: Section I: Estimated Means from SPSS Results). This shows evidence for

favoritism, by way of higher ratings, of an out-group, which goes against basic socio-cognitive literature on in-group bias.

The results yielded a quick investigation out-group favoritism over in-groups, a clear difference was apparent in most scales. Let's take for example the Violent Scale, when comparing neutral, positive, and negative ratings. This scale revealed first, in Group 0, the Muslim category was rated the highest in the positive ratings, in fact there were no negative ratings. The negative ratings vividly increased in Group 1, where the Muslim category further received the lowest positive ratings, revealing that when students know they are rating different categories (Gr0) they rate the out-group more positively, the group they are known to hold negative perceptions towards, due to negative Muslim portrayals in the media and public discourse. These types of changes were evident in all scales for Section I.

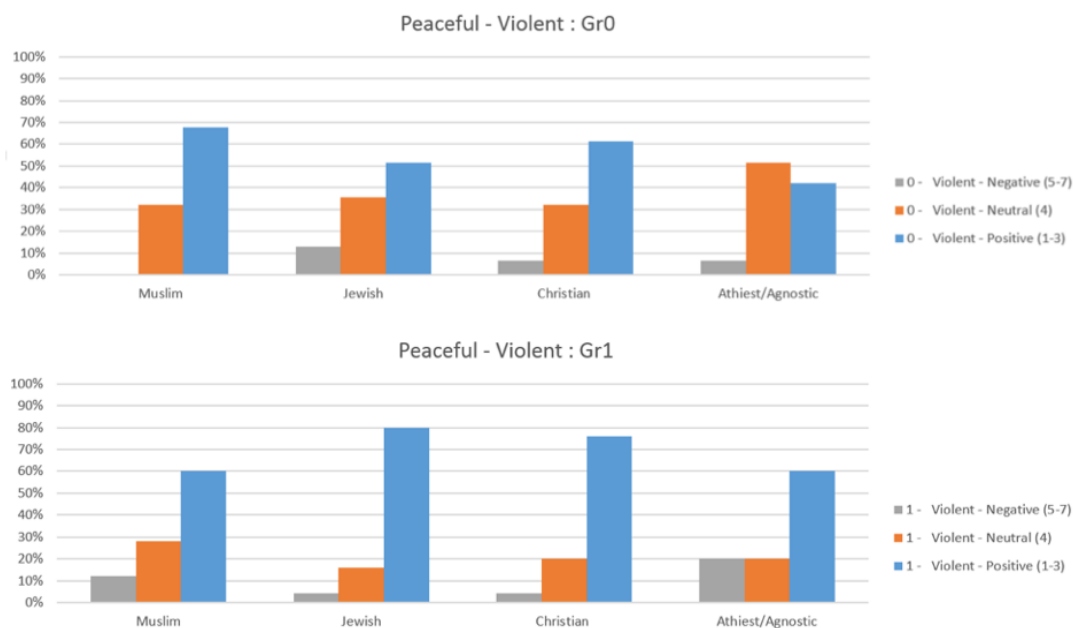


Figure 8: Muslim, Jewish, Christian, Ath/Agn – Negative: grey, Positive: blue, Neutral: orange (Gr0 vs Gr1)

When combining all (positive, negative, and neutral) ratings, we can see that overall, in Group 0, Muslim women were seen as most peaceful, followed by Christian women, then Jewish and Atheist/Agnostic women. With the change in survey design to viewing question-by-question, there is a shift in ratings for Group 1 puts Christian women as most peaceful, followed by Jewish women, then Muslim and Atheist/Agnostic women.

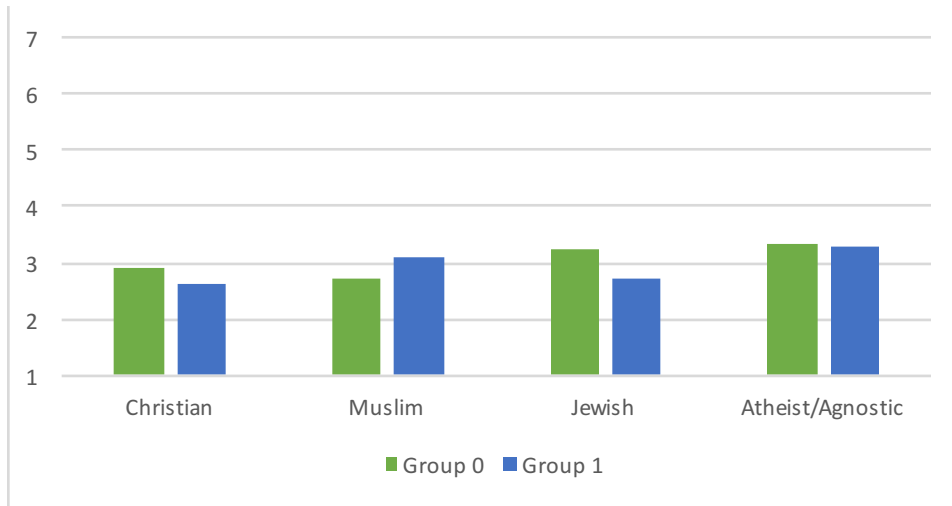


Figure 9: Group 0 and Group 1 overall rating comparison for the Violent Scale

Lastly, looking at the scaled figures, it is evident that moderacy bias still exists, all ratings were on or above 3, which is a point away from the midpoint, and remained on the positive end of the scale for all categories, except for the Apathetic and Oppressed scales where atheists/Agnostics was seen as significantly more Apathetic, and likewise for the Muslims on the Oppression Scale (see figures in Appendix A: Group 0 versus Group 1 Differences on the Scale). This may suggest evidence for social desirability pressures or due to fear of exposing own prejudice towards other races/religions, in which case students seem to bend-over-backwards to behave in a way society advocates as correct, having a positive outlook of out-groups.

Future changes for this section would include dropping the Intelligent-Unintelligent scale and Devout-Apathetic scale. Also, due to the response approach it is apparent that students remain relatively neutral when seeing the entire survey, but also highly positive when seeing the

scales question-by-question and category-by-category. So, if students notice they are rating other religious groups too, they may tend to give the same ratings or simply give positive ratings to all items. Due to these results, the questionnaire would in the future have two versions, where one version would show one scale at a time, but with all categories of women shown for that specific scale. In this way, students will know they are comparing the different religions. The second version would have each survey rate one category on these scales. Another option is to change the questions to ask “are women from [insert faith] more or less oppressed/violent/etc. than women in your faith?” In that case they are prompted to decide, in a direct way, which is more or less of one attribute than the other. Finally, this section would be its own study, excluding all other sections.

Section II – Participants’ Views of Campus Environments for Muslim Students

Description

This section included seven open-ended questions about the on-campus environment, and thus was qualitative in nature. There were yes/no questions or agree or disagree, with room for the participant to elaborate on their answers. This section included question about Muslims in general, whereas other questions pertained to Muslim women specifically. For the purpose of this paper, I was mainly interested in Muslim women, and not perceptions of Muslims in general, therefore I will be emphasizing questions that address my thesis topic, though will provide a general data about the other question/answers.

Response Approach

All three groups answered this section of the survey: Group 0 (31 participants), Group 1 (25 participants), and Group 2 (52 participants), a total of 108 participants. A total of 19 students skipped at least one question, whereas 35 students remained neutral on at least one question. All

groups' data were combined, as there were no meaningful differences between the groups 0, 1, and 2. In the table below, data were split between positive responses (when answering in favorable views and support of Muslim).

Question	Skipped	Positive Responses	Neutral/ Mixed	Negative Responses
1 "Should the university provide a prayer room for Muslims in the SAC to make the campus more attractive to Muslims? Why or Why not?"	5	59	2	42
2 "Would you feel comfortable rooming with a Muslim student? Why or why not?"	2	98	2	6
3 "Should we take more measures to assimilate Muslims into our university culture? How so?"	3	48	21	36
4 "Do you feel discomfort or threat around female Muslim students who cover their face? Why?"	3	86	2	17
5 "Should we ban the Muslim headscarf "hijab" on campus? Why or why not?"	2	103	1	2
6 "Does the Islamic headscarf "hijab" have negative images tied to it? Explain."	1	23	5	79
7 "Have you seen any positive images of Muslims women wearing the headscarf or covering their face?"	3	51	2	52

Table 4: Section II - Distribution of responses

Results of Proportional Analysis

Question 1 – 55% of students felt the university should provide a prayer room, whereas 39% felt the university should not. Those who did not agree, did not agree due to the location proposed, others incorrectly reasoned that there was no religious presence for other denominations on campus, whereas some claimed the need to have separation of religion and education, and Muslims should just pray at home. Those who agreed explained that Muslim students should be able to practice their religion just like any other student who is able to attend campus churches. Question 2 – 91% of students said they would not feel uncomfortable rooming with a Muslim student, whereas 6% said they would feel uncomfortable. Those who did not prefer rooming with a Muslim student felt uncomfortable with Muslims beliefs and customs, and ideas regarding Muslims, terrorism, and the headscarf. Question 3 – this question yielded varying

interpretations, where some thought of assimilation as a positive, others thought of it as a negative. After recoding, 80% gave a positive response (if they interpreted assimilation as a positive, and therefore agreed or if they interpreted assimilation as a negative and therefore disagreed), and 16% gave negative responses.

For the following four questions a more detailed representation of the data will be provided, with quotes from student responses, as they pertain to perceptions of Muslim women.

Question 4 – 80% of students said they do not feel discomfort around Muslim women who cover their face, whereas 16% said they do feel discomfort. For those who did not feel discomfort, their answers were similar to the following example: “No! It is part of their culture, nothing wrong with that. There are too many ignorant people out there that are very racist and naive about people: they make too many generalizations.” Students were either offended by the thought of the question or simply understood or respected the values of Muslim women who choose to wear the headscarf, whereas others admired the women’s courage and devotedness (see Appendix B for example responses).

For those who did feel discomfort (or threat), their answers varied: “Yes, the black freaks me out and the fact that if they were to do something they would not be able to be recognized because of their head covering. Also, media portrayal gives it a bad name.” Some felt discomfort more than threat, whereas some felt irritated by the headscarf and the Muslim religion, noting that is more oppressive and male-dominated. Others mentioned the level of coverage being an issue, several mentioned the color black of the garment, furthermore many mentioned the negative media portrayal of the Muslim culture.

Some did not feel threat or discomfort, but still held some negative perceptions, for example: “No, I don't. If anything I feel bad for them. Like they were forced to be hidden or

something. The husband dominates and it's not fair. That's if the woman is older and has everything covered except her eyes. If a woman has her face open, just the head scarf, I don't think anything negative of it.” Here the student differentiated her negative perceptions based on the level of coverage. This response was coded as positive because the student said they did not feel discomfort or threat. However when reading further into her explanation, there are negative perceptions of Muslim women who choose to cover their full face. Similarly, another student said: “not threatened but wonder why they do it. sometimes I have trouble understanding why (other than modesty) would want to cover face just because I would have trouble having to do that.” Students exhibited confusion and lack of understanding (see Appendix B for more examples of student responses).

Question 5 – 95% of students said the headscarf should not be banned, whereas 2% said the headscarf should be banned. The overwhelming majority said banning the scarf would be discriminatory and infringe on personal rights/freedom of expression and decency. Students had other explanations as to why they did not believe in the ban: some felt it was similar to wearing a rosary, or religious Christians wearing long skirts, Jewish women wearing wigs, and simply that it is part of the Muslim culture and should not be outlawed. One example: “ABSOLUTELY NOT. Excuse me for being a government major but this is an expression of her constitutional rights and by preventing a woman from wearing a "hijab" would be a great miscarriage of justice. Fear should not be a motivating factor in stripping any individual of their civil liberties and if UT were to instill a policy as such, the Supreme Court would strike it down in the name of the Constitution and for the sake of this democracy.”

For those who preferred to see the headscarf banned, their responses simply said “Yes”. Those who remained neutral or skipped the question did not provide an explanation, except for

one, voicing concern for security and identifying people: “I’m undecided. I think we should always be able to see people’s faces considering it causes a security risk on campus. I guess we shouldn’t, because America was founded on freedom. I just feel that it’s a bit of a risk to allow anyone to not show their face, considering that is the primary way of identifying people in the event of an emergency.”

Question 6 – the majority of students said the headscarf does have negative images tied to it, 73%, whereas 21% of students said the headscarf has no negative images attached to it. For those who said there were no negative feelings attached to the headscarf responded with a simple “no,” or mentioned that the reasons why people may say yes are negative connotations, stereotypes, and fear. Some mentioned that it can be seen positively depending on the person’s perspective as in the example from one student’s response: “I don’t personally think so. However, with rising rates of islamophobia, especially in such a conservative state like Texas, I am sure a large population of people attribute it with negative connotations.” Those who said there are negative images tied to the headscarf, mentioned terrorism, oppression, and media portrayal that affects their perceptions: “I think the media portrays them in a negative light, associated with terrorism and women being oppressed.”

Those who remained neutral had similar answers as the examples below: “I don’t know the history or background tied back to the hijab.” Or mentioned symbols in other religions that could have negative images tied to it, one student’s example: the cross and the KKK.

Question 7 – after asking students if there are negative images tied to the headscarf, they were asked if they had seen any positive images of Muslim women: 47% of students said they have seen positive images of Muslim women, whereas an equal 47% said they had not. For those who had seen positive images, their responses included seeing images on social media: Tumblr,

Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest etc. Some mentioned that those who are Muslim around them actively try to show positive images of themselves as women whom wear the headscarf; volunteering, training, or participating in community or school events. Example response: “There is a student who attends the University of Texas at El Paso who always wears her hijab who was recently a sun city princess and was incredibly proud to display her culture as well as honored for being selected.” For those who had not seen any positive images, simply answered with “no” or mentioned that even if there are positive images, these are rare: “I don't recall, honestly, maybe.... but even at that it's minimal.” (See Appendix B for more student response examples.)

Summary and Future Changes

The student responses for Question 7 were important, and point to the lack of positive image portrayal of Muslim women in the mainstream media. Positive images of Muslim women were mentioned to be found through social media, platforms where Muslim women can advocate for themselves. This question is significant for intervention purposes and those wanting to change negative perceptions of Muslim women. Interventions should target both mainstream media, and through education and books where positive images of Muslims should be the norm, not negative images as the overwhelming majority of Question 6 answered. In question 6, 73% of students said there are negative images tied to the Islamic headscarf, whereas in question 7, 47% have not seen any positive images of Muslim women. In both these questions, those perceptions were either the overwhelming majority, or considerably high in proportion.

In the future, I would change the survey to have students select Yes, No, or Neither, before providing space to explain their answer. It was definitely taxing to decide between a comment that was neutral or negative/positive in nature, because some answers did not give a definitive response. Furthermore, I found that students interpreted some questions differently.

For that reason, the questions need to be rewritten in a clearer manner to avoid different interpretations or misinformation. For example, in some of the responses for Question 1, some students disagreed because they said no other religion has the privilege of praying on campus grounds, even though the University of Texas at Austin is home to several religious denominations/churches within campus grounds, so disagreeing with the proposal shows at least ignorance of the current situation. Rewording of Question 1 to mention that as other religious groups have this privilege should it be applied for Muslims too would make the question more informative. Another question pertaining to assimilation of Muslims, where some saw assimilation as something positive, and others saw it as a negative, needs to be clarified in the future as well. Clarifying the questions where there is little room left for interpretation will help gain a more accurate response, and avoid extra work in coding. Furthermore, having the yes/no questions be selections rather than written responses will help in data analysis. Lastly, instead of seeing if students agree or disagree, ask them: “what kinds of nouns and adjectives or words come to mind when you see someone wearing a Muslim headscarf (niqab or hijab)?” to gain more insight from students about the words and images they attach to the headscarf as an object/symbol.

Section III – Muslim Women Prejudice Scale

Description

This section was influenced by The Middle Eastern Prejudice Scale (MEPS), an 18 item scale assessing prejudicial attitudes toward individuals of Middle Eastern descent designed (Awad & Hall-Clark, 2009). MEPS was adjusted to become the MWPS (Muslim Women Prejudice Scale) included knowledge and attitude items testing student bias and perceptions of Muslim women. There were a total of 28 question, 18 of which were knowledge-based whereas

the rest were opinion-based/attitudes. Students either agreed or disagreed with the statements on a 7-point Likert scale. Items 1 and 5 are the same question written differently.

All statements were worded so as to reflect negative perception of Islam and Muslims, except for four questions, and these answers were reversed before data analysis. The statements were influenced by media portrayals of Muslims and Muslim women. Group 0 and Group 2 responded to this portion of the survey.

Response Approach

A large portion of students remained neutral as was the case in other sections, with a mode of 4 for all items, except items 1 and 5 where the mode was 1 on the scale. Item 1: “I am more cautious and uncomfortable around Muslim women who wear the niqab (a face veil with only the eyes showing),” and item 5: “I become concerned when I see a Muslim women wearing the niqab (headscarf and covering face, except for the eyes),” students’ answers for these two items further confirmed views to similar questions in other sections about comfort level and concern when seeing Muslim women who wear the headscarf. In this section it pertained to the *face-veil*, whereas in Section II questions 6-7 pertained to the headscarf, and Section I to Muslim women in general.

When looking at the overall response approach for all items in section III, a total of 41% were neutral on the scale (neither agreed or disagreed with the statements); 16 out of the 27 statements received higher neutral ratings than both positive or negative (Statements: 3, 7-12, 15, 17-19, 21, 23-25, 27). This indicated that most students preferred not to provide their opinion on whether they agree or disagree. Statement 2 was the only item that received higher negative ratings than positive or neutral, with students strongly agreeing with the statement that Muslim women are oppressed and need help. This was a negative statement because it assumed that all

Muslim women are oppressed, which is a negative stereotype and generalization based on media portrayal of Muslim women.

Results of Proportional Analysis

Overall, 39% of students disagreed with the negative statements (or agreed with the positive statements), whereas 19% of participants agreed with the negative perceptions/statements (see Appendix C for a question by question analysis).

For the first item, 16% of students answered they were more cautious and uncomfortable around Muslim women who wear a full face veil, whereas 57% reported they are not. For the second item, 40% of students believed Muslim women are oppressed because of their religious ideologies, whereas only 29% did not agree with this statement. For the third item, 32% of students believed Muslim women must be helped and freed from the oppression of Islam, and another 30% of students did not agree with the statement. For item 4, 31% of students believed Muslim women are forced to wear the headscarf or face-veil, whereas 34% did not believe so. For item 5, 8% of students stated becoming concerned when they see Muslim women wearing the niqab. Interestingly, the number decreased even though it is a similar statement to item 1, 63% do not become concerned (see Appendix C for the rest of the analysis).

and do not have a voice. This is also prevalent in the media (eg. Sex and the City 2. I honestly found this movie disgustingly offensive). I have noticed that people don't know very much about the Middle East / Islam other than what they see on tv and the news - which is usually very negative. Also, many of the ideas people have about Muslim countries are based on what they know about Saudi Arabia (ie women not being allowed to drive), which is not consistent throughout the Middle East.”

A final example:

“They are oppressed by their religion, but they don't understand it or care to change it. I think some people assume they're lame because that religion seems to have many rules.”

For more examples of student responses, see Appendix C: Section III.

Summary and Future Changes

What is interesting is that in Section II, students were drastically less neutral than in Section III. The difference between the two sections is that in this section, students’ knowledge, not just opinion, was being tested over very controversial statements. Many of these statements made students realize how little they knew, how to distinguish fact from what are generalizations they hear in the media, as revealed in their written comments in this section.

No significance testing was conducted for this section. In the future, it would be interesting to conduct a factor analysis to group and analyze the different types of statements. Some of the feedback received from the students at the end of this section showed that students felt these questions were based on facts of which they have little knowledge, and this may have led them to remain neutral. Rewriting the questions to check opinions rather than whether the statement is true or not can possibly result in more responses from the students’ personal views.

Section IV – Participants’ Political Views Relative to Muslims

Description

This section was answered by participants in Groups 0 and 2 (83 students total). There were six questions total, covering political views in the context of Muslims/Islam, with students answering “yes=1”, “no=2”, “not sure=3” and elaborating qualitatively in a follow-up question. Because this section does not cover the topic of my thesis, but provides background on participants’ political views as they relate to Muslims/Muslim women, a general description of the findings of proportional data will be provided for each question.

Results of Proportional Analysis

Overall, there were highly positive ratings (57%), followed by neutrality (28% - by answering not sure), with fewer negative responses (15%). Yet, it is concerning that 28% overall remained neutral on such issues as have to do with personal liberties, that they otherwise would not want policies inflicted on people of their own creed. Looking at responses question by question, for question 1, 31% of students approved of the way Barak Obama handled the war on terrorism, whereas 10% did not agree, and the vast majority 59% were not sure, with these students stating that they do not follow politics and were not sure where they stood. For question 2, 6% of students agreed with France’s prohibition of the headscarf and would like the United States to follow the same policy, whereas 71% did not agree, and 23% were not sure. For question 3, 4% of students thought that Muslims should be banned from traveling to the United States, whereas 84% did not agree with the statement, and 12% were not sure. For question 4, 5% of students thought that ISIS is representative of Muslims, whereas 66% did not, and 29% were unsure. Question 5 was almost equally distributed among the three options, asking students whether there is a connection between terrorism and the Muslim faith. As for the last question,

14% were unsure if we should increase surveillance of Muslim women who wear the headscarf and face veil, and 10% said we should.

Question	Mean	SD	Mode	yes	not sure	no
Question 1: Do you approve or disapprove of the way Barak H. Obama is handling the war on terrorism? Explain	2.28	0.91	3	31%	59%	10%
Question 2: France prohibits the Islamic headscarf in public areas and schools, should the US follow the same policy? Explain	2.16	0.53	2	6%	23%	71%
Question 3: Donald Trump wants to ban Muslim travel to America, do you think this should also be implemented in the US? Explain	2.09	0.39	2	4%	12%	84%
Question 4: Do you think ISIS is representative of Muslims or the Muslim faith? Explain	2.23	0.55	2	5%	29%	66%
Question 5: Do you feel that there is a connection between terrorism and the Islamic faith? Explain	1.99	0.79	2	32%	30%	38%
Question 6: Should the government surveillance of Muslim women that wear the headscarf and face veil in the US be at a higher level?	2.05	0.49	2	10%	14%	76%

Table 5: Section VI - Distribution of responses

Future Changes

There are no future changes I envision currently for this section, except that I would not include this section in the future, but possibly use it for a different type of study or include the questions as statements in Section III.

Section V – Scarf/No Scarf Image Ratings

Description

Group 0 (31 participants) and Group 2 (52 participants) answered questions for this section, using a 7-point Likert scale for 16 images of women with and without a headscarf, and different levels of modesty and ethnicities.

The students were asked to rate to what extent they felt worried seeing someone like the person represented in the image, and how comfortable they would feel around that person. Then they rated each image on eight scales: (1) not sexy – sexy (7), (1) not beautiful – beautiful (7),

(1) uneducated – educated (7), (1) dependent – independent (7), (1) unoppressed – oppressed (7), and (1) violent – peaceful (7). Note that in this section positive ratings were between 5-7 on the scale, whereas negative ratings were 1-3, with neutral a 4, reflecting neither negative or positive adjective.

As for the images used, some images are of the same woman with and without a scarf, to see if the headscarf in itself would affect the overall perception of the woman on the scales. Image 2 and 9, image 3 and 10, image 5 and 14, and image 6 and 16 are of the same person. Other images are of women similar in some aspects but different in others to see how they compare in ratings. I wanted to see how participants would rate the different women in these images, with race/skin tone/eye color or scarf style/color contrasted. I wanted to know whether perceived race through facial features and eye color could affect perceptions. Also, there are two women wearing a full face veil.

The means and standard deviations reported are based on the results from each question and the number of students who answered that section. These results are provided scale by scale, comparing aggregated positive ratings (5-7 on the scale), neutral ratings (4), and negative ratings (1-3) for all images.

			
1	2	3	4
niqab, blue eyes, white skin	Black scarf, brown eyes and skin tone, smile	Scarf, white skin, blue eyes, smile	Nude scarf, medium brown skin, hazel eyes, *exotic
			
5	6	7	8
Black scarf, darker skin	No scarf, medium light skin, black eyes	Niqab, brown eyes, brown skin	Colorful scarf, green eyes, white skin *professional
			
9	10	11	12
No scarf, brown eyes and skin, smile,	No scarf, white, blue eyes, blonde hair, smile	Black scarf, black skin, brown eyes	Bright scarf, blue eyes, smile,
			
13	14	15	16
Bright loose scarf, brown skin, light brown eyes *exotic	No scarf, black hair and eyes, darker skin, smile	Red scarf, black skin and eyes	Silver scarf, medium light

Figure 11: Women from different ethnic backgrounds with/out a Headscarf

Response Approach

Data for each scale are provided in Appendix D for a more detailed look at positive, neutral, and negative response rates, and how these proportions change based on the scale and images. After looking at the students' responses for each scale, I found the incremental

differences between images and how they were rated on the different scales telling. Below an aggregate of all scales is provided to give a general idea of how each image was rated in comparison to other images.

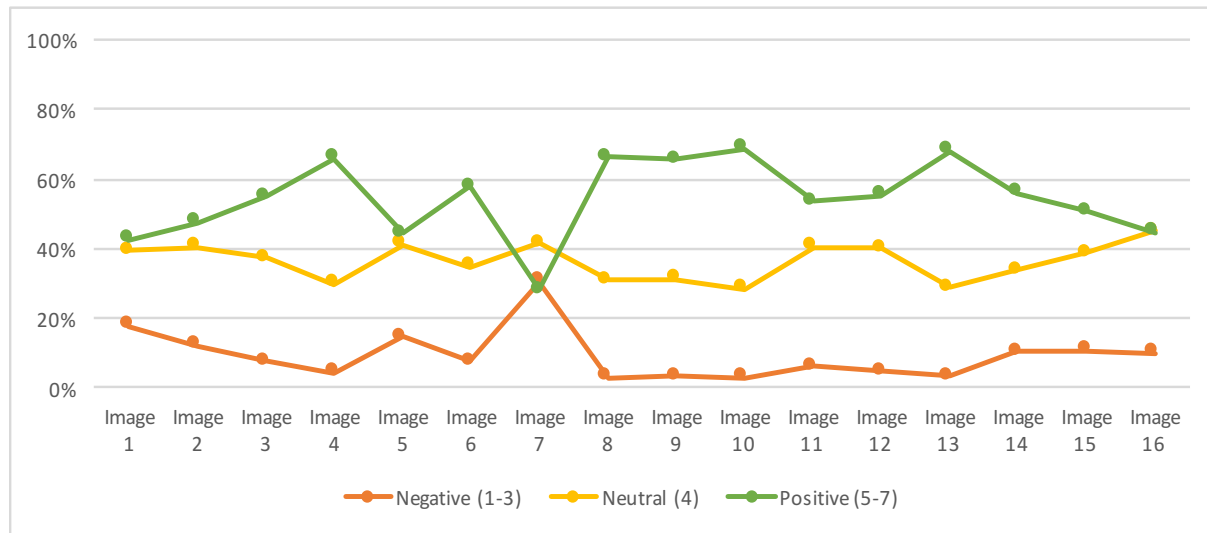


Figure 12: Aggregates of positive, negative, and neutral responses for each image

Overall, when aggregating all the positive ratings for each image on all 8 scales, image 10 received *the highest positive ratings overall* (69%), rated between 5-7 on the scale. The woman in the image is a blonde white woman with no headscarf. Though the image was presented in grey scale, students still rated it most positively overall. Although image 7 received *the highest negative ratings* (31%), rated between 1-3 on the scale, which is one of two images of women in the full face-veil. The difference between the two images is that the one rated most negatively has a darker complexion and brown eyes, whereas the other has blue eyes and lighter complexion. Image 16 received *the highest neutral ratings* (45%), of an Asian woman in a silver scarf, with a neutral look. When looking at the lowest ratings, image 7 received *the lowest positive ratings* (28%); images 8, 9, 10, and 13 tied with *the lowest negative ratings* (3%); two of the images are of women without a scarf whereas image 13 is of an exotic dark complexion woman with a loose headscarf, and 8 is of a light complexioned woman in formal-chic attire and

a pastel headscarf. Image 10 received the *lowest neutral ratings* (28%). When breaking down the ratings scale my scale, the results differ, with some women rated positively on one scale but rated negatively on another scale.

The mode of response varied by scale (see Appendix D for tables of means, standard deviations, and modes). For the first scale, “How worried would you be if you saw the woman in the image on campus or in a public place?”, participants chose 7 as the most often selected rating on the worried scale for all images (1-16), reflecting no feelings of worry at all. The same applied (mode = 7) to the second scale, “How uncomfortable would you be if you saw the woman in the image on campus or in a public place?” For the third scale, the mode was 4, reflecting neutrality, except for two images. Image 13, a picture of the exotic medium complexioned woman in a cream loose scarf, received a mode of 7 (very sexy). Image 4, the exotic looking woman with a tightly wrapped scarf of pastel color complementing her complexion, received a mode of 5. This was interesting because it further pointed to the fact that women can be categorized as sexy based on facial features and how they choose to present themselves, regardless of how covered they are. The mode for the fourth scale, the beauty scale, was somewhat mixed but overwhelmingly neutral (4). Images 4, 8, and 13 received a mode of 7, while images 6 and 10 (women not wearing the headscarf) closely followed receiving a mode of 5. Even on the beauty scale, the images of women wearing the scarf received a mode of “7”. Although there are many variations of women without the headscarf from different ethnic backgrounds, there is not as much variation of beauty. It may be that putting an equally above average image of a sexy/beautiful women without a headscarf will yield higher ratings for women without a headscarf. Nevertheless, this points to the fact that if the media showed more

diversity in what Muslim women wearing the headscarf look like, it may yield a more positive perspective of these women.

Results of Statistical Analysis

After running a repeated measures ANOVA, using a bonferroni adjustment, I found no significant differences due to Group as a fixed factor on all scales, confirming results from prior sections that Group was not a significant variable in the model as a main effect or a moderator for all 8 scales. Here I decided to include the race/ethnicity of the participants as a variable, comparing White versus Non-white, as there were 33 white participants and 48 non-white participants. There were further no significant differences with Race/Ethnic background as a fixed factor, except for the between subject effect for two scales. Race/ethnic background showed a main effect on the “educated vs not educated”, $F(1, 77)=5.58, p=0.021, \eta^2=0.068$, with non-white participants on average giving higher overall ratings for all images. The same applied to the “independent vs dependent” scale between subject effects, $F(1,79)=5.72, p=.019, \eta^2=0.067$.

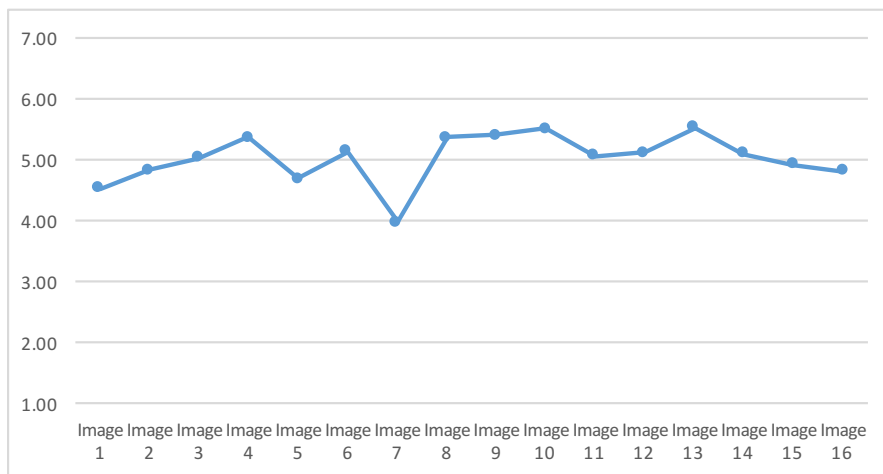


Figure 13: Comparison of Overall Mean for Each Image

The figure above provides a visual representation of the overall estimated marginal means for images. Images 13, 10 and 8 received the highest overall means, whereas Image 7 had a mean that is significantly lower than all the images. Image 13 was rated the highest, and it was one of two exotic looking women, with the only difference between them being that the woman in image 13 is wearing a loose rather than a tight scarf. It seemed that physical attractiveness may be one of the most influential attributes for first impression and perceptions. Simply by someone looking more attractive, whether with or without a headscarf, elevated their overall ratings. As Aristotle once put it, “beauty is a greater recommendation than any letter of introduction,” a statement echoed by scholars like Berscheid and Walster. Yet, it seemed that a person would have to be extremely attractive wearing a headscarf to defy the regular rules, as Image 10 of an average looking white, pretty girl is the runner up – This may touch on interracial standards of attractiveness, which might reduce prejudice. Additionally, physical attractiveness is often stereotyped by people who believe “what is beautiful is good” (Dion, Berscheid, & Walster, 1972), which is why Image 13 was rated overall the highest, a physically attractive individual also perceived to be highly intelligent, personable, kind, etc.

There were significant main effects due to Images on all scales. The analysis of the within-subject differences among the 16 images will be provided scale by scale. However, due to the number of images provided and the substantial number of significant pair-wise comparisons for each scale, details of the pairwise comparisons will only be provided when comparing overall ratings between certain pairs of images or groups of images, as there is an overwhelming amount of data to discuss. A brief description of each scale along with a profile plot will give broad and key comparisons.

There were very significant main effects within the images on the Worry scale, using G-G correction, $F(5.03, 392)=16.62, p<.001, \eta^2=0.176$.

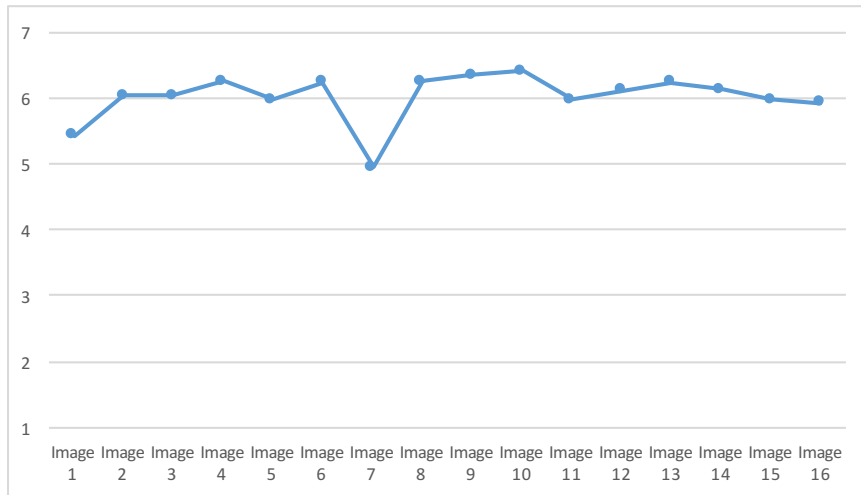


Figure 14: Means for Worried Scale

When looking at the pairwise comparisons for the Worry Scale, the pairwise comparisons between Image 1 and the rest of the images, and Image 7 and the rest of the images revealed that, though both women are fully covered with only their eyes showing, there are stark differences. For Image 1 (of a blue-eye woman wearing a face-veil) there are only three images with significantly different ratings (p -value less than .001), images 9, 10, 13). Images 9 and 10 are of average pretty women with their hair showing and a wide beautiful smile, and 13 is of an exotic looking women wearing a loose cream scarf. There are eight other images showing significant differences (between .05-.001), images 2, 4, 6, 8, 11, 12, 14, 15. There were no significant pairwise comparisons between 1 and 3, 5, 7, and 16, all of which are images of women wearing a headscarf that looks grey or black (one of them is also wearing the face veil). When looking at the pair-wise comparisons of Image 7 to the rest of the images, there is a p -value=.000 for all the images, except image 1 ($p=.451$).

Comparing Image 1 and 2, there are some significant differences that may be due to the level of coverage even when the scarf is black in color ($p=.031$). Although image 1 was a white blue-eyed woman, the face-veil compared to image 2 made participants feel more worried. In Image 2 participants were able to see the woman's face/smile, though she was of darker complexion and eye color. Here, we see that an extreme amount of coverage yields lower levels of comfort regardless of ethnic background.

Looking at the figure of the means, the four images of women who are the most covered received the lowest ratings (causing most worry) whereas women not wear the headscarf caused the least worry. Those with a headscarf in a lighter color and with exotic features received higher ratings (less worry) than those wearing the full black face veil. Extreme coverage with the color black received lower ratings (most worry), whereas medium coverage and bright headscarves receive higher ratings, and not wearing a headscarf at all received the highest ratings (least worry). Between the two highest (image 9,10), the image of the white woman received higher ratings than the non-white woman. Even though both women have beautiful wide smiles, and though the image of the white woman is in grey-scale, it still received the higher rating than the colored image of the non-white woman.

There were significant main effect within the images on the Comfort Scale, using G-G correction, $F(5.63, 421.97)=16.30, p<.001, \eta^2=0.179$. Images 1 and 7 had significant differences compared to the other images. The pair-wise comparisons of Image 1 to the rest of the images was similar to the Worry Scale, though not in every comparison. An interesting difference is that there was no pairwise significance between Image 1 and Images 3, 5, 11, 12, 15, and 16 on the comfort scale, suggesting that they were rated more negatively than on the worry scale and more similar to Image 1. All of these images are of more average looking women from different

ethnicities, and all of which are also wearing the headscarf in different colors. None of these women would be called exotic, but still look pleasant. As for Image 7, and how it compares to other images, the same pattern follows as before with significance ($p=.000$) for all images, except for image 1, yet still relatively high ($p=.002$) compared to the Worry Scale.

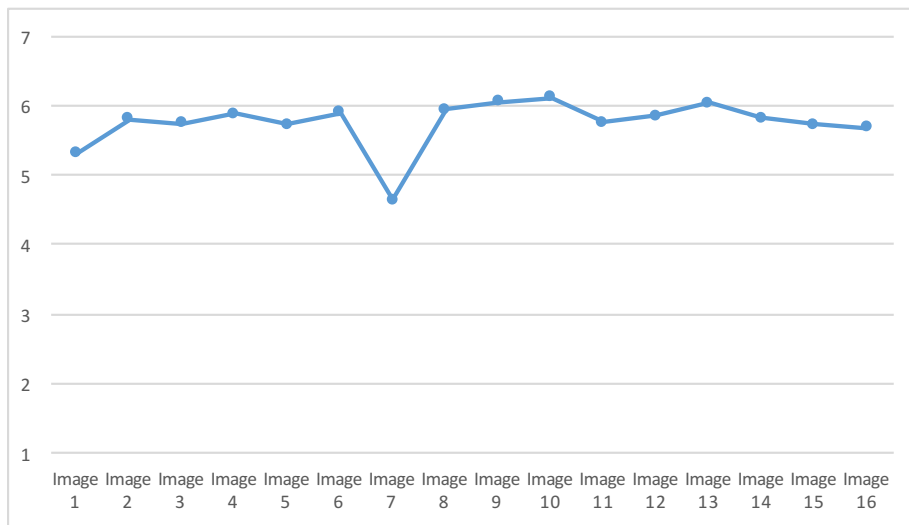


Figure 15: Means for Comfort Scale

The figure above, shows the drop in the comfort level for Image 7 as it compares to the rest of the images, even as it compares to Image 1, which as mentioned before is of a blue-eyed women wearing the face-veil. Images 9 and 10 still were the highest, with Image 13 closely following.

There was a significant main effect for the images on the Sexiness Scale, G-G correction, $F(7.87, 637.80)=31.48, p<.001, \eta^2=0.280$. Image 7 was again rated very significantly less sexy ($p<.000$) for most images, followed by Image 16 ($p=.028$), and no significant difference with Images 1, 2, 5, and 14. Image 14 was the only woman not wearing a scarf. So, I looked further at how Image 14 compared to the other images. It was only rated significantly less sexy than Images 4, 6, 8, and 10, and not different from Image 5, the same woman but with a headscarf.

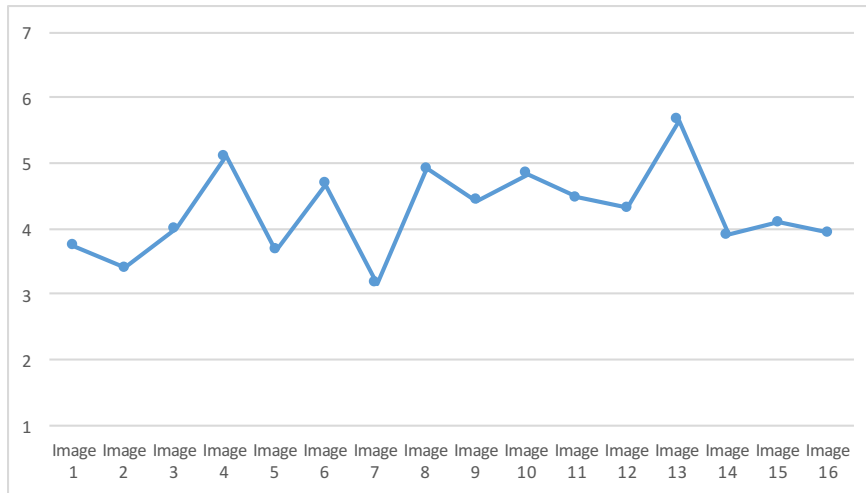


Figure 16: Means for Sexy Scale

As seen in the figure above, Image 7 was rated as the least sexy, followed by image 2, then image 5 and 1, all of which are of women wearing a black face-veil or headscarf. Image 11, was also of a black woman wearing a black headscarf, however she received higher sexy ratings, possible due to her facial structure and skin tone. Image 13 received the highest sexiness ratings, followed by image 4, again both of which are exotic-looking women.

There was a significant main effect for the images on the Beauty Scale, G-G correction, $F(7.51, 607.91) = 29.22, p < .001, \eta^2 = 0.265$. The same general pattern follows as with the sexy scale; in the figure below the ratings are similar to the sexy scale, though the range is a bit tighter and the trend sits one point higher on the scale. So, overall the images on the beauty scale were rated higher than the sexiness scale, which means many of these women are seen as more beautiful than sexy.

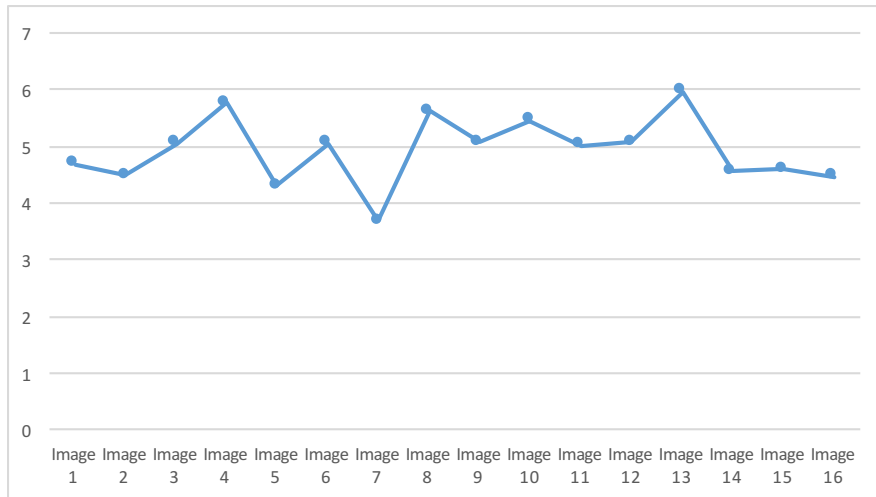


Figure 17: Means for Beauty Scale

There was a significant main effect for the image variable on the Education Scale, using G-G correction, $F(8.09, 638.88)=11.20, p<.001, \eta^2=0.124$. The pattern for the education scale is a bit more linear than before, but again Image 7 was rated the lowest, but not followed by image 1. Here we see that Images 1, 5, 6, 7, and 11 are rated with the lowest educated ratings. Image 1 was rated as significantly less educated than Image 3 ($p=.006$), Image 8 ($p=.000$), Image 9 ($p=.000$), and Image 10 ($p=.007$).

Image 2, a woman who looks from the Middle east or South Asia wearing a black headscarf, was only perceived to be significantly less educated than Image 9 ($p=.016$), which is interestingly the same woman without the headscarf. So, the same woman was rated as less educated when wearing the black headscarf versus without the black headscarf. The same woman in Image 2 was rated significantly more educated than Image 7 ($p=.002$). This compelled a look at Image 3 and how it compared to Image 10, of the same woman without a headscarf. Although there was no significant difference ($p>.05$), the image of the girl with the headscarf was perceived as less educated.

Image 8, of a woman wearing a pastel headscarf with chic/professional attire, was rated as significantly more educated than Images 1, 5, 6, 7, and 16. Images 8, 9, and 10 were rated the

most educated. So, for this scale the highest rated images changed to include Image 8 rather than what we have been seeing (Image 9 and 10, or 13 and 4), perhaps because the woman wearing the headscarf looks professional. This supports literature on clothing stereotypes.

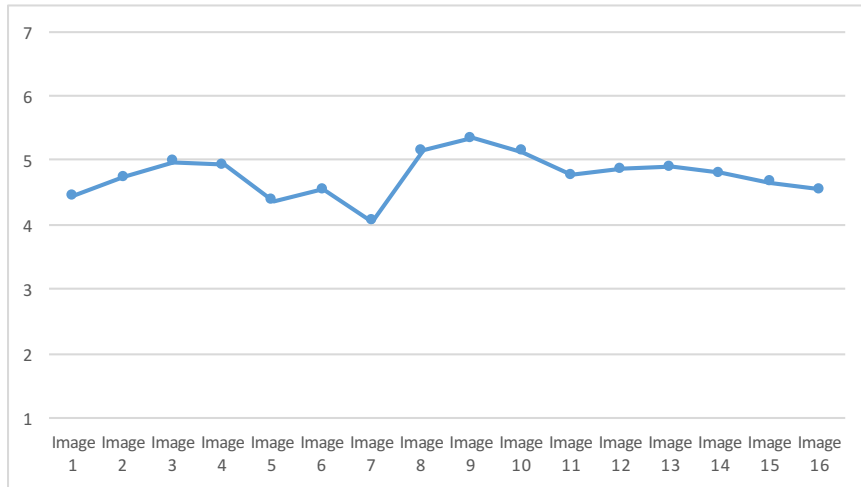


Figure 18: Means for Education Scale

There was a significant main effect for the image variable on the Dependency Scale, G-G correction, $F(7.16, 581.20)=19.36, p<.001, \eta^2=0.193$. After reviewing the pairwise comparisons, Image 1 again was seen as significantly less independent than all images except for Images 5 ($p=.146$) and 7 ($p=1$). Image 7 closely followed a similar trend. Image 10 was rated as significantly more independent than Images 1, 5, 7, 12, and 16. Even Image 9 was rated as significantly more independent than Images 1, 2, 3, 5, 7, 11, 12, 15, and 16. Both Images 9 and 10 are of non-headscarf wearing women. Image 8, which was perceived as most educated (along with 9 and 10), did not receive high significance for independency ratings as the other two images. Image 8 was only perceived as significantly more independent than Images 1 and 7 ($p=.000$); almost all other images it compares to had a p -value of 1 or close to 1. Similarly, Image 13, of the exotic woman with the loose headscarf, was only perceived as significantly more independent than Images 1 and 7.

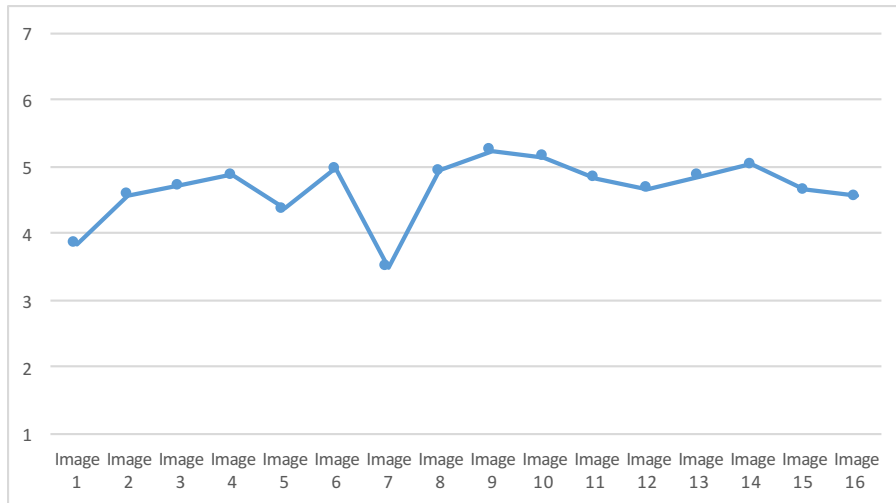


Figure 19: Means for Dependency Scale

Intriguingly, Images 1, 5, 7, and 16 thus far, almost always showed up in every scale with the least positive ratings than other images. The women are average looking and all in black or grey headscarves/full face veil.

There was a significant main effect for the image variable on the Oppression Scale, G-G correction, $F(7.42, 593.84)=19.27, p<.001, \eta^2=0.194$. Image 1 again was perceived as significantly more oppressed than all images, except for 2, 5, 7, 15, and 16. And Image 7 was perceived as even more oppressed ($p=.000$) when compared to all images, except image 7 ($p=1$) where there was no significant difference but still rated as more oppressed than image 1. This is quite remarkable because the two women are dressed very similarly, yet their eye color/structure along with skin tone, make a difference in the way they are rated.

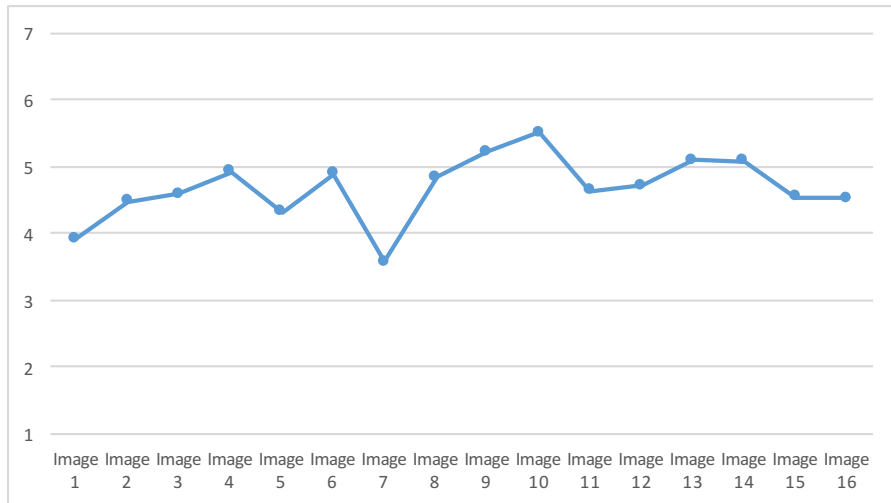


Figure 20: Means for Oppression Scale

Image 10 comes out on top, perceived as the least oppressed, followed by Images 9, 14 (both of which are not wearing headscarves), and 13 (the exotic woman wearing a loose headscarf).

There was a significant main effect for images on the Violence-Peace Scale, G-G correction, $F(6.85, 541.35) = , p < .001, \eta^2 = 0.130$. This was a very interesting scale on which to compare Images 1 and 7, yet again, where the dark complexion/brown-eyed woman is perceived as more violent. What is more interesting is that Image 5 and 6 are rated as most violent after Image 7 and before Image 1. Image 6 is of a strong looking Asian woman who may seem more violent due to her posture in the photo. Image 5 is of a woman in a black scarf as well.

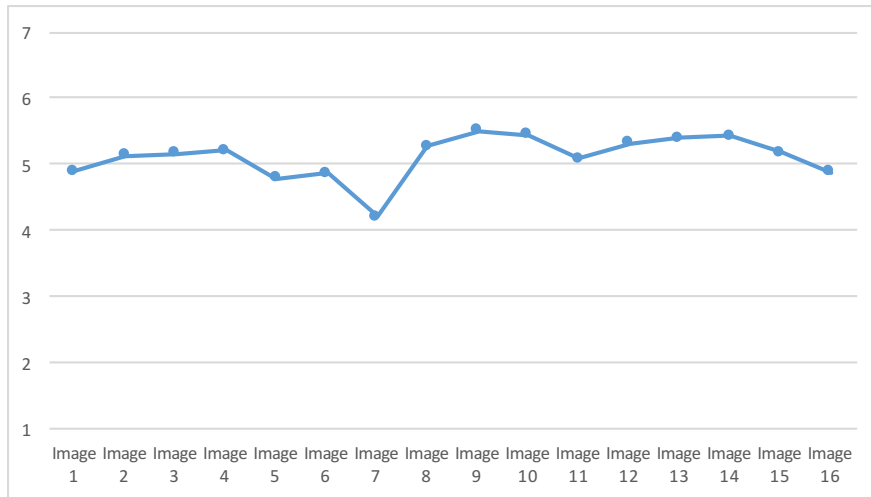


Figure 21: Means for Violence-Peaceful Scale

After looking at the above results, I decided to look into comparisons of similar images of different races/levels of attractiveness or images of the same woman with and without a scarf to check the relationship between ratings and the level of coverage/scarf color regarding the perceived level of intelligence, beauty, sexiness, peacefulness, and oppression. A person's physical appearance is the one obvious characteristic that is accessible when evaluating a person or image and forming an initial impression of the person. The results speak to this truth, and shed light on how a woman who chooses to wear the headscarf compares to other women who are either from different ethnicities or do not wear the headscarf.

After the initial statistical results, I began comparing the two images that were most negatively rated on all scales, Images 1 and 7, due to the extreme level of modesty that both images exhibit.

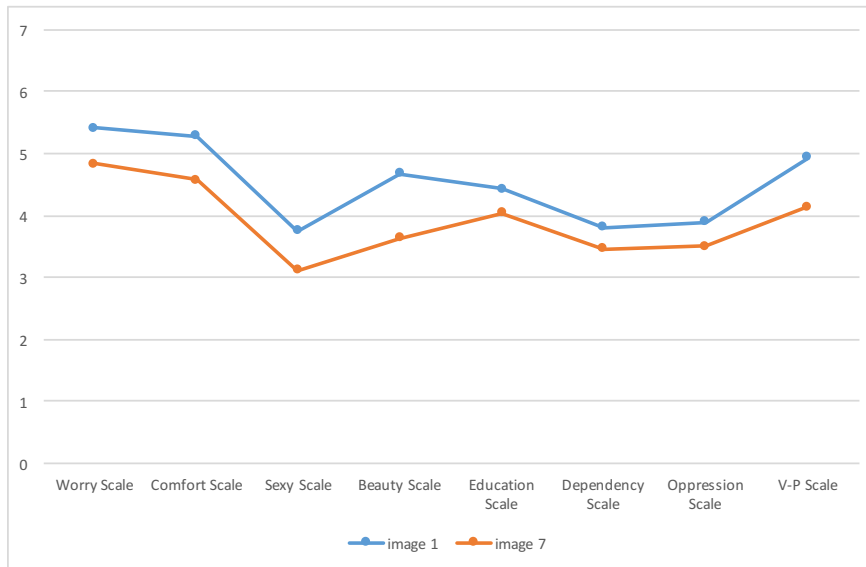


Figure 22: Comparing Image 1 and 7

Overall, Image 1, white blue-eyed woman, was rated higher on all scales, and around 1 point higher on the Beauty scale than Image 7. The only difference between these two women is their complexion and eye color, yet the differences are half a point to a point difference, suggesting societal and racial stereotypes that even when both women are fully covered, a white blue eyed woman is regarded more highly. As previous studies have noted (Cross & Cross, 1971; Clark & Clark, 1947; Moss et al, 1975) white skin color is more desirable than darker skin color. These results imply that “if a white norm of beauty exists in our society, race prejudice would be expected to be maintained as a function of this subtle inculcation of standards of attractiveness” (Moss et al., 1975, p.19).

Next, I compared Images 1 and 7, both of white women, but one dressed more professionally using several garments and colors to express a professional and chic style, whereas the other wears the stereotypical black garment associated with Muslim women (due to media portrayals).

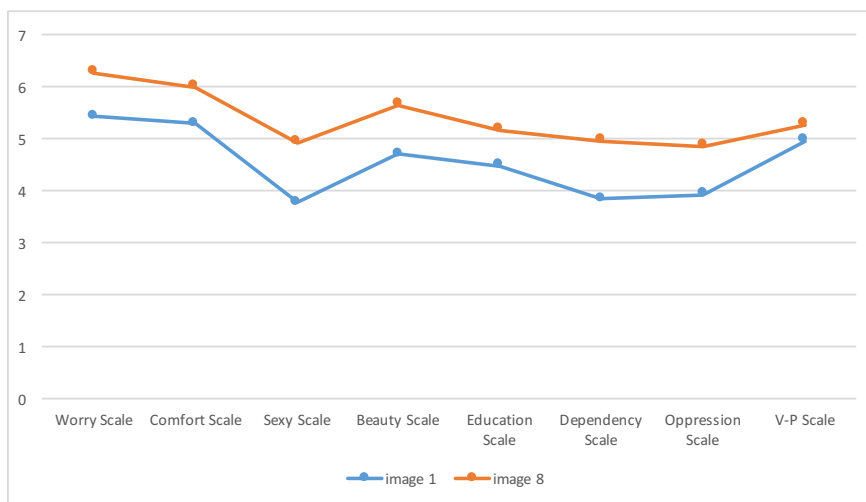


Figure 23: Comparing Images 1 to 8

Here we can see how the different styles of modest attire can affect how a Muslim woman is perceived. As some students suggested in other sections of the survey, brighter colors and adding a bit of personal style into the wardrobe can lead to different perceptions of attributes. This points to clothing stereotypes, and how the way one chooses to dress can affect perceived intelligence, beauty, and even levels of oppression and aggression.

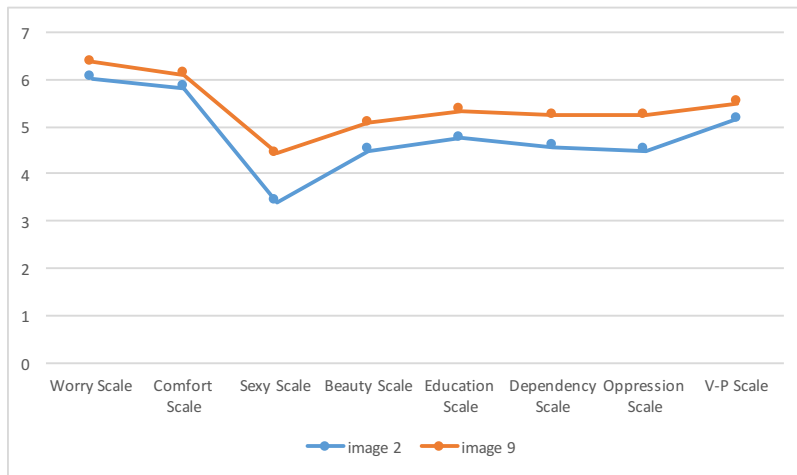
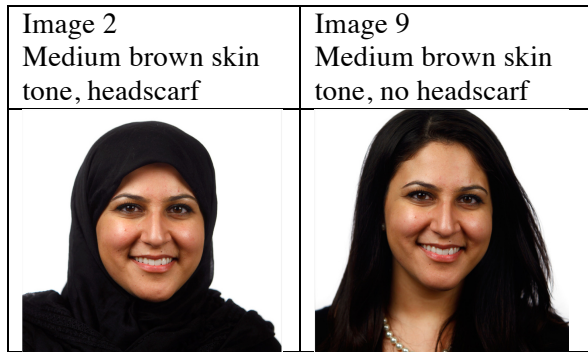


Figure 24: Comparing Image 2 to 9 of the same woman

Although here I was comparing the same woman, wearing a headscarf overall decreased her ratings on all scales, with less difference on the worry, comfort, and violence-peaceful scales, and more difference on the sexy, oppression, and dependency scales. A similar trend applies to the comparison between Images 3 and 10 (Figure and images in Appendix D under Pairwise comparisons), of a white woman with and without a headscarf, further indicating that women who wear the headscarf are generally regarded more negatively than women not wearing the headscarf, unless they are very exotic looking (above average), and in that case only on some scales of appearance are they rated higher. Furthermore, comparisons for Images 5 and 14, also of the same woman with and without the headscarf, further confirms the statement that a woman with a headscarf is rated less positively than when she is not wearing a scarf.

Does the level of coverage affect perceptions of the same women depending on the level of coverage? The answer was yes. Here, Images 1, 3, and 10 of white blue-eyed women are compared. The woman with the face-veil received the lowest ratings on all scales, the image of the woman with the headscarf followed with the second lowest ratings on all scales, and the woman with no headscarf received the highest ratings on all scales.

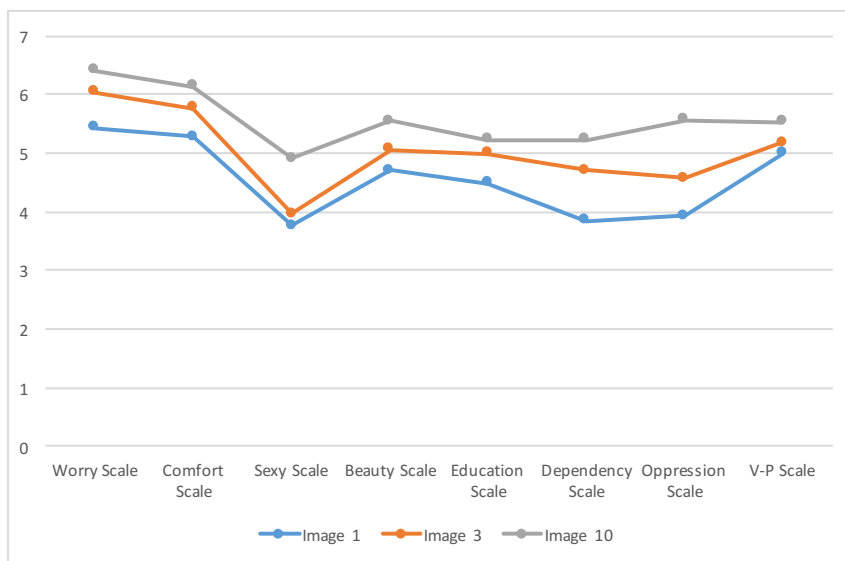
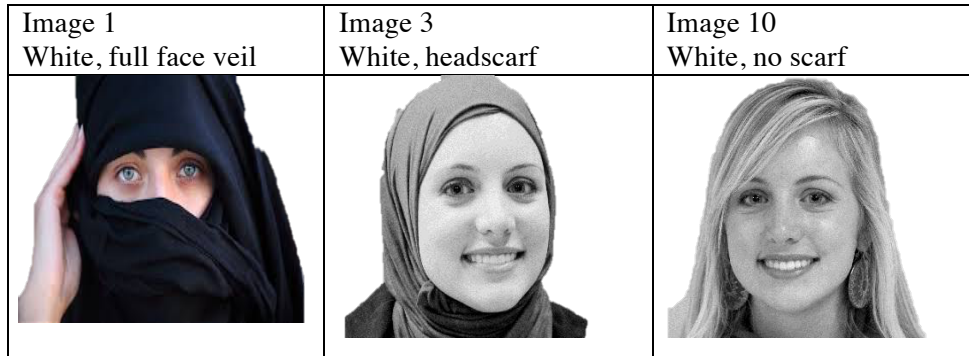


Figure 25: Comparing Images 1-3-10

I followed up with another two relatively similar looking women with a headscarf, and both with wide smiles, with the difference being that one was white the other non-white, and the color of their headscarf.

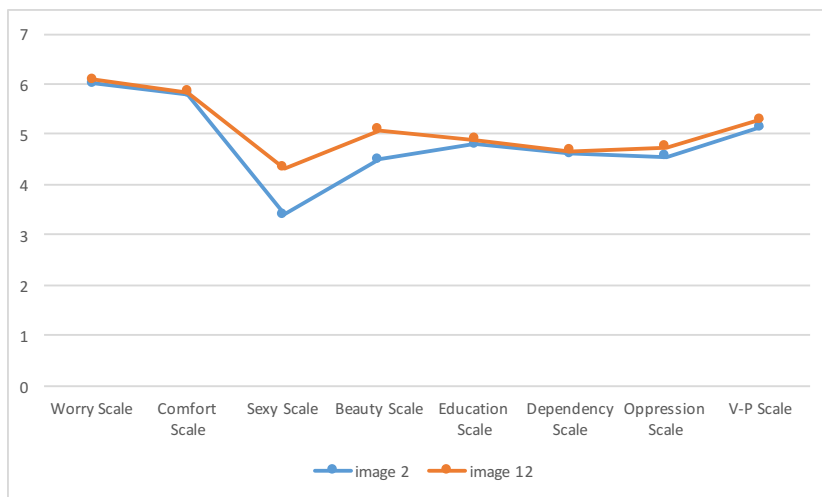


Figure 26: Compare images 2 to 12

The images were generally rated similarly, with Image 2 rated more negatively on some scales: beauty, sexiness, oppression, and violence scales. This may be due to race or the effect of the headscarf color, with black receiving lower ratings than a bright pastel color. The comparison drawn between Images 9 and 10 (check Appendix D for pairwise comparison images and figure), both of which are of women without a headscarf, with wide smiles, and average beauty followed a similar trend, except that Image 9 of the non-white woman was rated as more educated yet more oppressed, less beautiful, and less sexy.

The following two images compared perceptions of a woman of an exotic/medium complexion and a white woman, both with light headscarves (Images 4 and 12). In general ratings are the same except on the beauty and sexy scales, where the exotic woman was rated

more positively. There was also a slight difference on the dependency and oppression scales, but too small to be of significance (check Appendix D for pairwise comparison images and figure).

I also wanted to see how two attractive women would compare if one was regarded as extremely beautiful/exotic, whereas the other professional, but still beautiful with a tighter headscarf wrap. I found that Image 13 received higher beauty and sexiness ratings (much higher on almost all scales), but lower on the education rating and only very slightly lower ratings for independence.

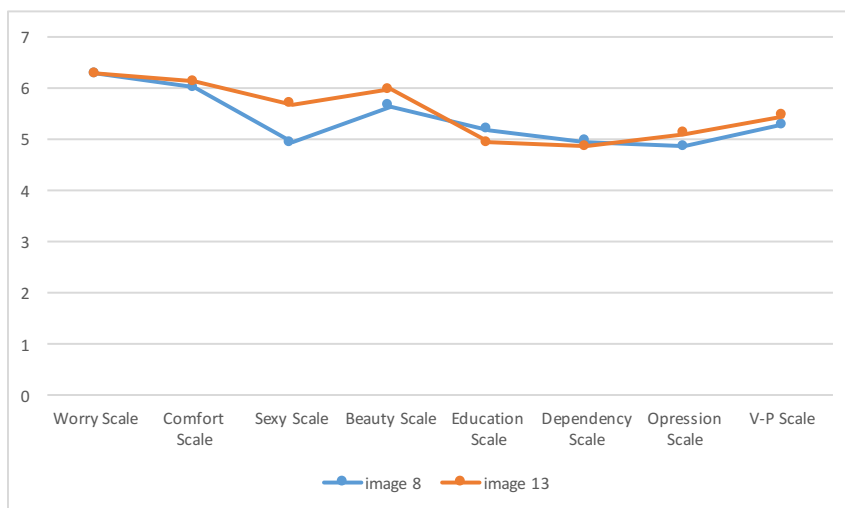


Figure 27: Comparing Images 8 to 13

When I compared the three images of women with dark skin tones, these images yielded similar ratings for comfort, worry, education, and peacefulness. However, Image 11 received higher independence, beauty, and sexy ratings, followed by Image 15, and Image 2 received the

lowest sexy and beauty ratings. These mixed results do not point to any one direction. We would think that the color red would give Image 15 the highest ratings, but this did not happen here. It may be that since Image 11 came right after the image of the white woman without a headscarf (Image 10), that students' ratings of this image were slightly higher than expected.

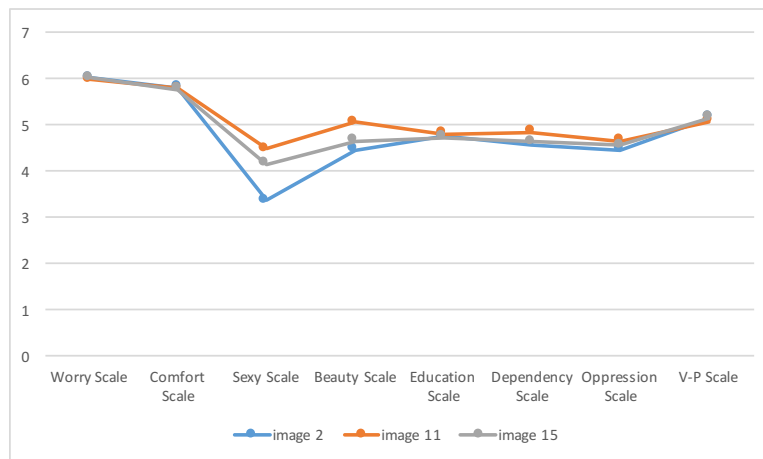
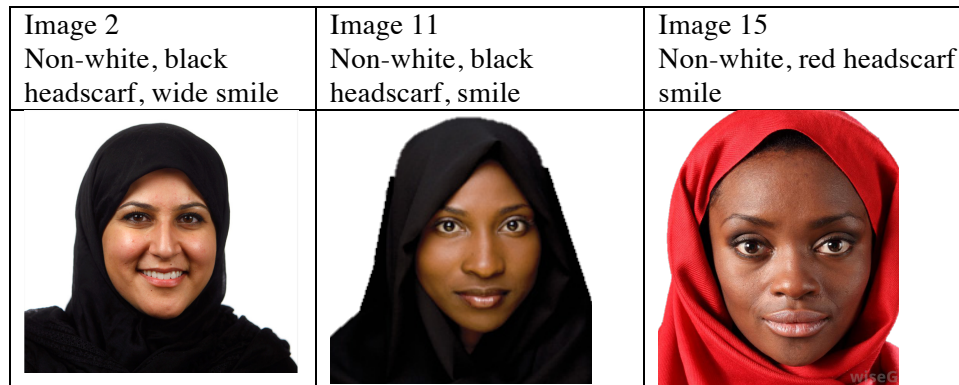


Figure 28: Comparing Images 2-11-15

The following four images are of women who are somewhat similar in facial features, however some have a darker skin tone than others, and one dressed professionally, whereas another with a loose headscarf. Image 8 was rated highest on education and independence, Image 14 was rated highest on comfort, beauty, sexiness, and peacefulness, and as most unoppressed. Image 4 received the lowest education ratings. And Image 12 the lowest sexiness and beauty

ratings, she was also seen as most dependent and oppressed of the 4 images. Image 12 was the least attractive or exotic looking, which is why overall she may be rated lower than the other images, since those whom are regarded as more attractive are also rated higher on other scales.

Image 4 Non-white, exotic, pastel headscarf	Image 8 White, professional, pastel headscarf	Image 12 White, wide smile, pastel headscarf	Image 13 Non-white, exotic, loose pastel headscarf
			

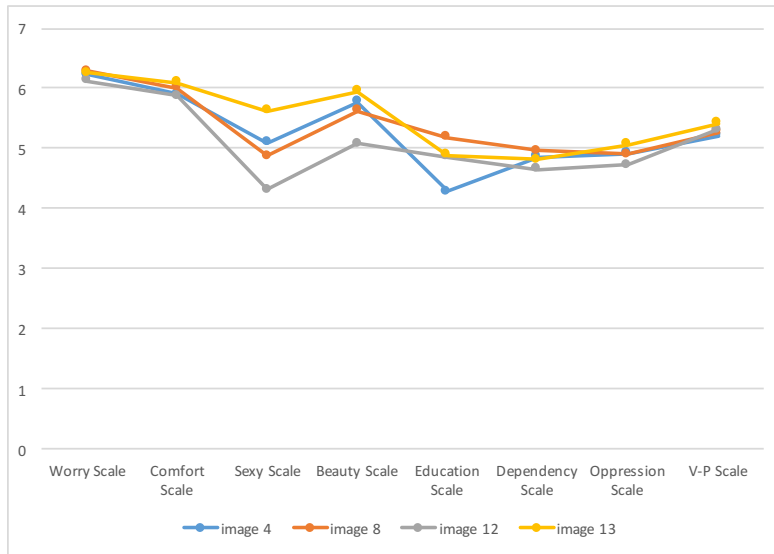


Figure 29: Comparing Images 4-8-12-13

When comparing women who wear the headscarf from different backgrounds (Black, East Asian, white, Middle Eastern, or Hispanic), the middle eastern exotic woman and white professional looking woman were rated higher on all scales (Images 4 and 8), whereas the Hispanic and East Asian women were rated the lowest almost on all scales. Ratings of the black woman goes up and down depending on the scale, but received the lowest beauty ratings. It seems that it is not only the way we are dressed and our race that affects perceptions, but also the level of perceived attractiveness seems to be very important.

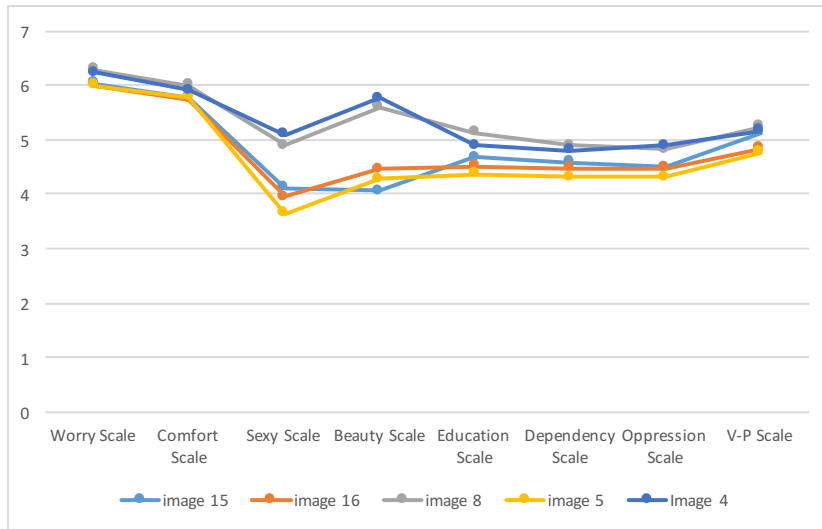


Figure 30: Comparing Image 4-5-8-16-15

After aggregating the results of all scales for each of the images in the figure above, the white professional looking woman was overall rated the highest, followed by the middle eastern woman, then the black woman, followed by the East Asian woman and finally the Hispanic woman.

I cannot rule out the possibility that other individual difference factors in these images beyond race and scarf color may have contributed to these findings as a potential confound. Future studies may incorporate more images of the same person or a different mixture of people with the same headscarf color who look similar overall.

Summary and Future Changes

I believe the race of each woman and clothing style are extremely salient interpersonal features that were certainly utilized by participants when rating the images, whether subconsciously or consciously. The multiple images provided with different races and images of the same person with a scarf and without a scarf also pointed to how clothing and beauty stereotypes affect the overall perceptions and ratings we give people. Providing a range of

images of women from different ethnic backgrounds, in different levels of coverage, partially addressed the concern brought up in some studies of relying on a single model.

These results are only suggestive, but point to the need for more research in this field, possibly looking into graphically manipulated skin tone variations as a solution to counter any effects due to individual differences. With more variation of different ethnicities, with and without the headscarf, the findings would be more informative.

Future changes to this section of the survey would include combining this section with the last section of qualitative reflections, as well as adding more variety of images mixing skin tone and features, and scarf color.

Section VI – Participants’ Reflections

Description

This section includes various qualitative questions that will be discussed question by question. All three groups took part in answering this section of the survey. There were eight questions total, with a final survey feedback question. In this section I will only provide general results of each question along with example responses.

Results of Qualitative Data

The first question of this section was presented to all three groups, however two participants left the answer section blank (n=106). The question asked: “Which image (a or b), if any, do you prefer and why? Does one look more pleasant or comfortable to be around? Explain. Please respond in short essay format.”

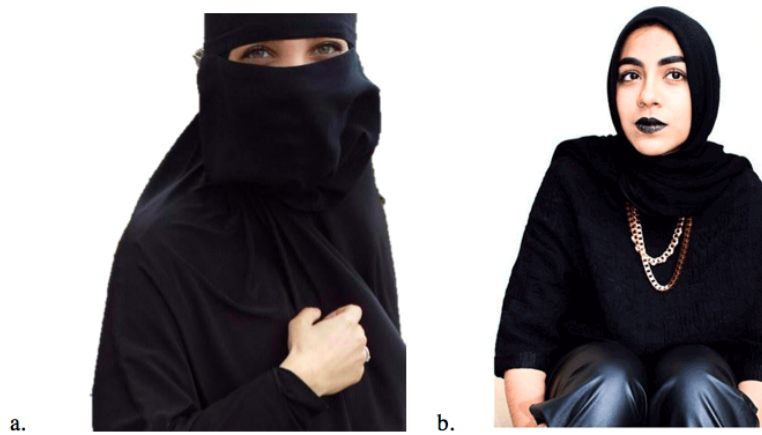


Figure 31: Woman A versus Woman B

There were four different response types: choosing a, choosing b, having a neutral response, or a negative response. Of the students who answered this section, 65% chose image b; 9% chose image a; whereas 20% remained neutral with positive explanations; and 6% found neither of these images pleasant nor preferred one over the other, and their responses had a negative tone. Many students mentioned image a's warm eyes, whereas others mentioned image b's lipstick and style both in a positive and negative tone. This tells us there is more to the discrepancies in how we choose to dress affects how people perceive us depending on how they relate to the choices of clothing and accessorizing. In addition, other uncontrollable parts of our being, like our complexion and facial features can make a huge difference in how approachable, appealing, or pleasant we seem to our peers. Style may make someone seem more relatable, or sometimes distant depending on the perceiver's own views.

Nine percent (9%) of students who answered this question said they prefer image A. With similar explanations as the ones below (see other statements in Appendix E Section VI):

- "Honestly image A has beautiful eyes so she's a lot more pleasant to look at. If I were asked who would I want to talk to, I would also choose image A just because of her drop

dead gorgeous green eyes. Girl B seems like a normal person as well and I'm not intimidated by either. For sure I would try to be friends with either but more so with A."

- "(A) looks more pleasant... even though her head scarf freaks me out... Her eyes seem warm and the other girl looks rebellious and scary."
- "I am not a big fan of dark lipstick so I prefer image A. I would feel more comfortable with someone in full hijab than dark lipstick. Image A looks like she is smiling from what I can see of her eyes."

What was interesting here is that Image A's green eyes trumped being able to see someone's full face because of her style choices of the dark lipstick. This may give reason to why even in Section V Image 1 received better ratings than Image 7 along with other Images on different scales.

Sixty-five percent (65%) of students preferred image b, mentioning her style, chains, lipstick, and approachability as reasons why they chose her. For others, Image A reminded them of oppression and patriarchy, which is why they had not chosen her. Their responses were similar to the following examples:

- "B only because there's less mystery as to what her emotions or reactions might be since you can see her whole face."
- "Both pictures are pleasant and are completely comfortable to be around, but I prefer image b because she's wearing pretty awesome chains and her lipstick looks awesome."
- "B, A looks like a terrorist, and I like to see peoples faces when I talk to them"

For 65% of participants, eye color did not matter as much as style and being able to view the person's face when it came to who they prefer. Also, the negative associations drawn from the full face-veil with oppression, terrorism, and patriarchy affected most students' choice of

choosing someone with a lighter complexion and green eyes versus a darker complexion and brown eyes. Fear and negative connotations surpassed societal/racial standards of attractiveness, that generally associate a white person's features with being as more attractive, though recent research shows that having a tan or some level of exotic shades of tan were rated higher for beauty and attractiveness.

Twenty percent (20%) of participants had neutral/mixed responses (check rest of the responses in Appendix E)

- "I would not prefer one over the other because they are both equal to me. For Image A, the only thing that I think about is what the rest of her face looks like. I am more intrigued by her mysteriousness and curious about her identity. However, these curiosities do not not ignite fear or anger, but presents an opportunity to learn more about someone who shows so little. For Image B, I can see that she has jewelry and lipstick on which are more commonly seen on women. I do not have as many curiosities about Image B because I can assume she is more accustomed to American culture."

The second question was answered by all three groups as well, but one participant left it blank (n=107). "Why are two women (Catholic-Christian vs Muslim) who adhere to the same level of modesty seen and treated differently? Please answer in a short essay format." For this question students' writings were coded based on prominent themes. Here some comments are double coded because they cover several comment themes. Notice that the Image of the nun and the Muslim woman is actually the same women in two different garments, whereas the group pictures are of different women.

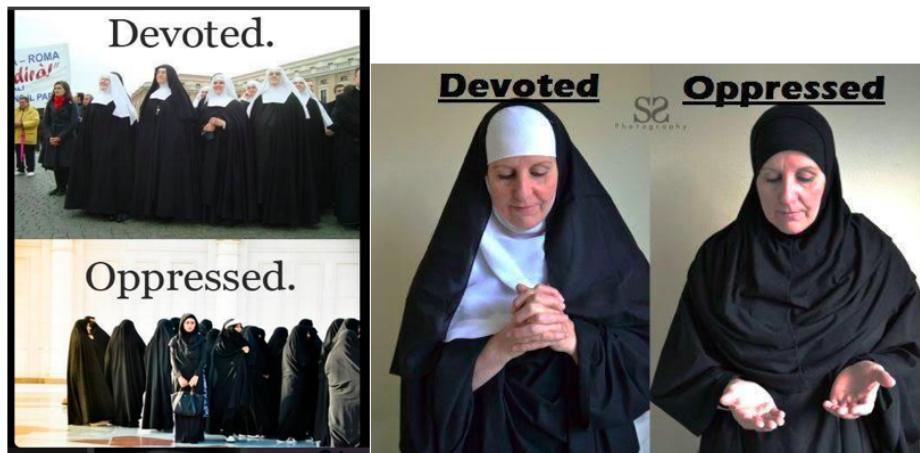


Figure 32: Nuns versus Muslim Women Dressed Modestly

The first comment type from participants assumed Muslim women are generally forced to cover, again mentioning oppression and male-dominance, whereas nuns have the choice, as explained by 18 participants (17%), “Catholic nuns live that lifestyle because they chose to put themselves in that predicament. Whereas Muslim women are often treated poorly by men due to their religion and have no choice in religion” (check Appendix E for more examples). Another comment type was of students talking about foreignness versus the norm, where the Muslim religion is foreign in the United States and Christianity is the norm, and therefore Muslims are misunderstood or feared. Eleven students (10%) made this comment type, “I think its because we live in a western civilization that has deep roots in Christianity. Its far easier to have an "us vs. them" mentality when you don't understand the other people in question. It also could be because we see less nuns, so they're glamorized as being "saintly" whereas regular everyday Muslim women wear their garments.”

The third comment type was about the male role (male-dominance) and how that is the problem. Eight participants (7%) mentioned male-dominance while explaining their view of why the two women are treated/viewed differently: “Because women are not oppressed in the Catholic faith; Muslim women are oppressed by their male counterparts. / / I think the problem

here is not the women in the religion, it is the men. Catholic men do not oppress their women, but Muslim men oppress their women. Again, probably due to the statutes against women within the Muslim religion.” This also points to the common assumption that Muslim men oppress the women, which in reality depends on culture. There are many conservative Muslim men who do not oppress women, yet there is a prevailing image of Muslim society and Muslim men that is negative, when it is based on culture not religion. By contrast, viewing the Christian counterpart as good, when there are plenty of Catholic/Christian men who oppress their women and use the Bible in doing so. Perhaps, the difference comes from media portrayals, with Muslims being generally represented negatively based on certain countries, like Saudi Arabia or Afghanistan, that are not representative of the entire Muslim population.

Sixty-seven participants (63%) mentioned prejudice, stereotype, ignorance, discrimination, stigma, bigotry, close-mindedness, double standard, negative perceptions, and how the media plays a role in all these negative outlooks and outcomes. Those were put into one category because they spoke of the same over-arching theme: we think negatively because we are shown (or only know) a biased/narrow view of a culture/religion, as for example: “Because of the media portraying all muslims in a negative fashion, people get this inaccurate image in their heads of what muslims are and generally think catholic-christians are better, even though they practice the same things at certain points.” As another example: “The prejudice against the Muslim women leads people to think that the Muslim women are being oppressed when showing religious devoutness.” Some participants further mentioned race as a factor (7%), with the following example double coded for stereotypes as well: “I’ve never actually noticed the hypocrisy of this! I believe that they’re treated differently because of the simple thing it boils down to: race. The United States has traditionally been Caucasian, Christian/Catholic-dominated,

and nuns are accepted/treated with reverence and seen in a good light. Muslim women, however, covered in the same amount of cloth, face a different perception because of instances in the media where cases of Muslim women not wanting to wear the scarf is blown out of proportion.”

Some students mentioned clothing color (5%), as the combination of white and black is nicer than wearing all black, and two associated it with the grim reaper, “I think it's a matter of the color, or absence there of. Black is so desolate, so when you see women in it, it's as if you are taking all the life from them, where as white seems more pure and acceptable especially with the combination (dark on outskirts with white on inner). The grim reaper is always shown as a figure drowned in black, black in most cultures is bad.” Two students mentioned that both women are oppressed, four students mentioned that both women have the same ideals and are both devout, and five students mentioned fear of Muslims.

As for the third question, all three groups saw the question but 14 participants left it blank (n=108). This question asked student to “Reflect on the video,” with a short video showing two Muslim women arguing about the headscarf. One woman, Heba, is for the choice of wearing it; the other woman, Mona, is for the ban of the headscarf and says nowhere in the Quran does it say to wear it. Video on youtube is titled “CNN: French Niqab Ban Debate between Heba Ahmed and Mona Eltahawy”.

Each comment was coded once: for Heba, for Mona, both, neither, unclear, positive feedback about video but nothing else, or blank. Students who sided with Heba (arguing for choice) were the majority (43%), whereas only 9% of students sided with Mona, 16% mentioned mixed feelings, seeing strengths to both arguments, whereas 2% agreed with neither. Another 14% did not have a clear position, and made comments about what they believed should be the

law or how they felt about the headscarf without choosing sides, and 4% only expressed positive feedback saying they really liked the video or were surprised by it or found it interesting.

The following question, Question 4, was given after a series of images of Muslim women in different roles. This section was used to show a different perspective of Muslim women that people in America otherwise do not see. Below are the images, which were provided on a larger scale, one picture at a time, during the survey.

		
Muslim Fashion Blogger	Muslim Fencer	Muslim Activist
		
Muslim Celebrity	Muslim Astronaut	Muslim Golfer
		
Muslim Photographer	Muslim President of Kosovo	Muslim President of Indonesia
		
Muslim Olympics Shooter	Muslim Tennis Player	Muslim Ballerina
		
Muslim Figure Skater	Muslim Weightlifter	

Figure 33: Positive Images of Muslim Women

The follow up question to the images was “Do you think these images portray women who are oppressed? Are you surprised by them?” followed by a space for a reply. Many students mentioned that these images are different from the media/mainstream portrayal of Muslim

women. Many participants were surprised and thought there would be less fear and negative perceptions of Muslim women, and Muslims in general, if more accurate representations of Muslims were provided in the media. Also seeing that it is a choice according to the religion changed some students' perceptions.

Of those who answered with “yes/no” along with a longer explanation of their thoughts: 33% said the women did not look oppressed, 1% said they do look oppressed, 1% said they somewhat look oppressed, and 59% did not specify. Of the 59% who did not specifically answer with “yes/no”, they used positive adjectives when reacting to the images of these women: powerful, successful, beautiful. Furthermore, when answering the question, 28% of participants said they were surprised or somewhat surprised by the images, 41% were not surprised, and 25% did not specify, though again made positive remarks in their reaction to the pictures. The following three examples demonstrate how crucial it is to provide a more realistic view of the diversity within the Muslim culture and Muslim women (Check Appendix E see for examples):

- “I am surprised by majority of the images I saw, especially the astronaut. I took a double take, like "What an astronaut?!" The two presidents shocked me as well. So in the media their women are always portrayed without life and kind of desolate or without hope. However, the images I've seen here have shown me that Muslim women can do tremendous things despite the appearance of outside media.”
- “... They show the diversity of expression that occurs. Thus, they really invoke the idea that Islam isn't a limited religion. These women look powerful and fierce. I am surprised pleasantly, and I feel the surprise I see from these images is a cultural problem.”
- “... the Muslim fashion blogger and activist really surprised me and made me excited for the Muslim culture. Also, it was exciting to see that many of the women didn't wear

headresses. It made it seem like they had more of an option of what they were able to wear and that there is less oppression in the culture that we believe. I was unaware that there were any female Muslim presidents - that is amazing and a great win for not just Muslim women, but women in general.”

Another comment was a bit skeptical, yet with its skepticism made a great point for more research about Muslims and Muslim women, shedding light and a more realistic view of their lifestyle in different countries and fields of work: “I am little surprised. I feel like these women are really accomplished and powerful. However, it does make me question how many muslim women are actually this successful? I think it would be nice to see some data. I do not think many media websites include muslim women at all.”

Group 0 and 2 answered Question 5. Only five people skipped this question, which asked, “Does the way a Muslim woman dress change your perception of her?” It was asked in this section to give students time to reflect on what they had seen in sections III and V along with the positive images provided in this section, to help them reflect and write out their thoughts.

The majority, 60%, said “yes” the way a Muslim woman dresses does change their perception of her, whereas 38% said it does not change their perceptions of the woman, and 1% were unsure. The students’ answers were both thoughtful and interesting. For those who did think the way a Muslim woman dresses changed their perceptions, they explained that the level of coverage and color of the scarf and how the woman incorporates her own style makes a difference, and some mentioned how society has conditioned us to judge people that way. “I do think so a little. I think I perceive women who wear brighter clothes and scarves as happier or more carefree, and women who wear darker colors as more serious. I think I also feel more comfortable around women who where scarves but their face is still showing. Part of it is

probably influenced by media portrayals, but I also think it can be disconcerting to not see someones face when you are interacting with them because you cant get as many non-verbal cues as to what they think of you or what they are thinking in general.” (For other examples check Appendix E Question 5)

Those who felt it did not change their perception of the women (38%), and explained, mentioned that Muslim women should be able to wear what they want without being judged any differently. “No not at all. I believe that a muslim women should be able to dress any way she likes and however she is comfortable. No matter how she dresses, the perception of her should be the same and should be offered the same opportunities as everyone else.”

Question 6 was answered only by Group 0 (n=31). Students were asked to respond to this paragraph: “We live in a culture that stigmatizes anyone who doesn’t conform to Westernized conventions, we should recognize the full humanity of Muslim women, and their right to express their faith and their culture anywhere, and not judge them based on a piece of fabric.” Based on students’ answers: 58% agreed with the statement, 3% disagreed, 3% both agreed and disagreed, and 16% gave personal thoughts without saying whether they agreed or disagreed. Around 19% did not answer this question. (Check Appendix E Question 6 for example responses)

Finally, questions 7 and 8. The last two questions were difficult to code as students were asked to reflect and react without agreeing or disagreeing. These questions were answered by Group 0 and 2 (n=108). Due to the varying answers there were no proportional information collected. For question 6, students were asked to “React to the cartoon provided above (Male Dominated culture). What are your initial thoughts?” Many students felt the cartoon was true and funny/ironic, or that both sides judge each other or both are male-dominated, and some explained why each is judging the other. It made some rethink their views, whereas others

disagreed with the cartoon essentially saying that the woman in the bikini is free to wear or not wear whatever she wants, whereas the woman fully covered has no choice.

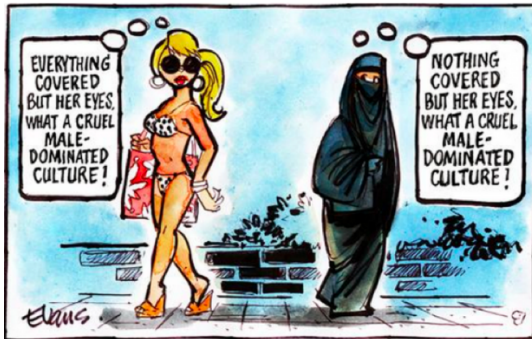


Figure 34: Image for Question 7

An example of a student's response: "I think both women in the cartoon have a valid way of thinking and it all depends on their points of view. In American culture, there's a growing movement of self love, body acceptance, and self expression so in a way, the woman in the bikini could be seen as embracing herself and her body. At the same time, however, this could be seen as a way of catering to men and their sexual desires, objectifying the female body. In Muslim culture, modesty is highly valued and encouraged in women as a way of showing respect. However, this may limit the ways in which a woman may dress or express herself simply because the belief is that her body is only for her husband to enjoy, not necessarily herself."

There were other comments and analyses of the cartoon of students' thoughts and frustrations that were interesting to read (Check Appendix E Question 7 for examples).

Question 8 was not received well by many students. Students were asked to "Reflect on the information in the above image about women's education in Islam versus Western society." Some students did not like how the images were portrayed, and were even skeptical if the information about women leadership in Islamic education, whereas others were surprised and accepted the information in the picture as true. Providing one example will not do the rest justice, therefore several examples are provided in Appendix E Question 8.

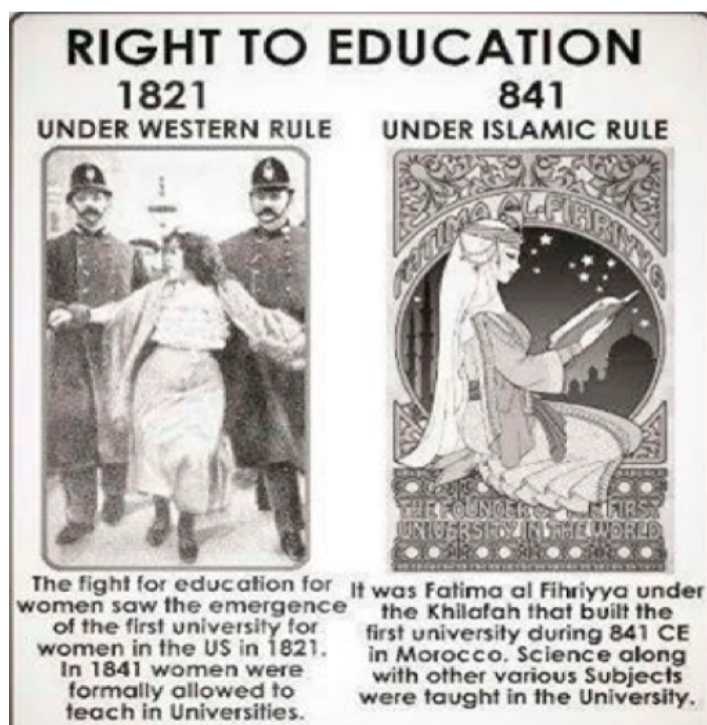


Figure 35: Image for Question 8

Summary and Future Changes

All of the participants' responses were interesting and informative in understanding the way participants analyzed and interpreted information provided. A detailed look at certain students' comments and development of thoughts throughout the survey will provide insight on how information affects change in perceptions or how strong personal beliefs prohibit conceptual change, like the example reactions to Question 7. This section should be used more as a classroom activity or in a focus group interview, where students reflect in small groups about stereotype formation and conceptual change, and specifically using Muslim women as an example. This is one way to start intervening through education to create more inclusive classrooms and societies, where media bias is fought at a grassroots level.

Survey Feedback

Students from Groups 1 and 2 (n=77) were asked "Did you feel uncomfortable answering survey questions about Muslim women or Muslims in general?" Of those that answered, 30%

said yes and 68% said no, and 3% skipped the question. Many explained that the discomfort came from lack of knowledge or just general discomfort (Example responses in Appendix F Survey Feedback).

Group 0 and 2 (n=83) were asked to provide general feedback about the survey, and 40 students did so: 55% gave positive feedback, 13% gave negative feedback, 10% gave a few criticisms not necessarily positive or negative, 15% gave their personal reflections, and 8% made comments that could not be categorized.

Positive feedback, like this: “I really liked this survey! It was super extensive and made me really think!” – was particularly great to read, revealing the usefulness of surveys as a learning tool. Or at the least, something that sparks conceptual change and a way to understand different perspectives. Instead of being instructed or shamed into considering others (whom are different), a “mere” survey was able to provide an opportunity for thought and reflection without students realizing what was happening (for the most part).

If shedding a bit of light on perceptions of Muslim women garnered this much positive feedback, then we know there is much more work to be done that may encourage people to be a little more conscious of their thoughts and perceptions – “I feel very enlightened on a subject I had no previous information on. I will now be conscious enough to make an effort to not feel uncomfortable around women wearing hijabs, it is simply their faith; indeterminate of their personalities.” (for all other positive, negative, critical and thoughtful responses check Appendix F).

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

Stereotypes are a salient part of our socialization process and are learned through the media and our daily interactions with the world. Due to the political climate negative photographic images of Muslim women (and Muslims in general) circulate in the media, supporting the establishment of negative implicit attitudes and stereotypes. Although images of Muslim women being oppressed helps others sympathize with them, these images also dehumanize Muslim women. By portraying the headscarf as a visible marker of inferiority and backwardness, it became symbol of oppression and degradation in the minds of many viewers. In this study, I sought to investigate how much of these negative stereotypes would be accepted by non-Muslim U.S. college students of today. Specifically, I wondered whether and how such negative stereotypes would affect students' perceptions of Muslim women on several attributes, and what would their perceptions and attitudes look like. I further sought to support and build on the current literature by investigating the reactions of non-Muslims to positive images of Muslim women, as they are rarely exposed to such images. By collecting students' thoughtful written responses, I was able to provide elaborate examples of students' beliefs and reasoning.

Discussion of Findings

The most compelling general result is that though the majority of participants in my study professed egalitarian beliefs, and passionately support Muslim women's constitutional rights to uphold their personal and religious values, their evaluation of Muslim women as they compared them to others may point to subtle forms of prejudice, warranting future investigations to provide more concrete evidence. The headscarf may have served as an implicit trigger for some degree of negative perceptions as shown in the students' overall ratings/perceptions (e.g. Section V results).

Thus, I could assert that it is not simply fabric; the wearing of the headscarf seemed to impact the overall evaluation of the woman in a negative direction when compared to women not wearing the headscarf (see pairwise comparisons). Interestingly, students mentioned several times throughout the survey that Muslim women are negatively portrayed in the media as “oppressed,” acknowledging the bias, still they themselves rated Muslim women as more oppressed than women of other faiths on the oppression scale. Perhaps subconsciously and innocently students have internalized those beliefs, which became apparent in their ratings. Again, this bias was evident in the pairwise comparisons, specifically the images of the same woman with and without a headscarf. As expressions of their attitudes and beliefs, it seems that these students further perpetuate the negative stereotype, possibly unconsciously.

Past research has suggested that women wearing headscarves are perceived as less attractive and less intelligent (Mahmud & Swami, 2010). My investigation supported these general claims, with some exceptions. My findings suggest that though the headscarf has some negative affect on the evaluation of the Muslim women, clothing stereotypes and attractiveness playing a salient role in formation first impressions of them. Confounding factors may affect the overall evaluation of the women wearing a headscarf more positively or negatively, such as for example, facial attractiveness/racial background, level of coverage (headscarf vs. face veil), color of fabric, and clothing style.

Even when a woman does observe modest attire, I found that having attractive facial features and complexion led to higher ratings on several positive attribute scales than were received by a less attractive person not wearing a headscarf. Other visible differences due to the race of the woman in the image was evident, specifically in Figure 22. The image of the white blue-eyed woman wearing a “niqab” was rated more positively than the brown-eyed, dark-

skinned woman in a “niqab”. Though these differences in ratings were observed in a couple of images, additional research is necessary to make any firm conclusions about how race may play a role in their evaluation.

Qualitative data further revealed that the style of the woman in the image and color of the headscarf are important for non-Muslim peers. Many participants preferred lighter colored scarves that complemented the woman’s complexion, with fashionable attire. According to students’ open responses, these modifications of dress made the woman in an image seem more approachable and relatable than others. For example, a headscarf was preferred over a face veil. As my findings indicated that the face veil (or “niqab”) was associated with greater negativity, and yet it is the least commonly worn among Muslim women, the media should use such images sparingly. Thus, portray more accurately the vast majority of Muslim women.

As for the color of the headscarf, a black headscarf (or a face veil) elicited negative feelings and stereotypes, and in turn led to a more negative evaluation of the woman wearing it greater than a light or colorful headscarf. This is interesting because the color black in clothing is usually associated with professionalism, sophistication, or sexiness; however, these associations seemed to be disregarded with the headscarf serving as a negative “Muslim” marker, activating perceptions of oppression.

I believe the clothing style and race of each woman are extremely relevant interpersonal features that were certainly utilized by participants when rating the images, whether subconsciously or consciously; though, more research on the interplay between attractiveness, race, and headscarf color/style is necessary to further elucidate how a Muslim woman who is White rather than Middle Eastern, Black, or Asian is evaluated based on these features.

Written Responses: Interpretation, Elaboration, Reflection.

I found particularly instrumental to my understanding of the survey takers' interpretations of questions their written responses. Not only did these prove how differently students interpreted some statements, it gave them a chance to elaborate on choices, and a chance to reflect on information provided to them. When students were given a chance to explain their answers, they seemed to be generally supportive of Muslim women who wear the headscarf. This type of survey seemed a great tool to help students reflect on their thoughts and beliefs, as some students used words like: *shocked*, *pleasantly surprised*, *engaged*, and *enlightened* to describe their reaction towards survey questions and feedback (see Appendix F and E). It further suggested student's willingness to fix perceptions and engage in conceptual change by accepting new found positive attributes and images. Providing a positive perspective of Muslim women garnered positive feedback. This suggests the necessity of providing positive images of Muslim women, as 47% of survey takers reported not having seen any positive images of Muslim women. Accordingly, instead of being depicted as helpless, oppressed, or violent, a more realistic narrative and visual representation of the diversity within this population seem necessary. The implications of these findings for race, religion, and social difference in social scientific research, both survey-based and otherwise, are discussed below (see Implications).

Response Bias and Social Desirability

A huge concern for researchers measuring attributes, perceptions, and attitudes through self-report surveys is an individual's tendency to engage in response bias. My findings suggest some level of response bias, as many students tended to stay neutral or near the midpoint of any scale, or on the positive end of the scale. Such response tendency makes it especially difficult to evaluate whether students are responding factually or distorting their answers to seem more desirable (e.g., appearing more open-minded by expressing good perceptions of out-group

members). Additionally, there was a difference, though not significant, between those who saw the entire survey at once versus those who saw the survey one question at a time. For the latter group, I saw a shift from neutrality to an increase in both positive and some negative ratings. This difference may indicate that students who saw the survey all at once and who therefore knew the topic of the survey may have responded more neutrally due to social desirability pressures or due to fear of exposing their own prejudice towards other races/religions. Some researchers attribute these types of responses to anxiety (Spilka, Hornm, & Langenderfer, 1966).

Social desirability seemed evident when students exhibited overtly positive opinions for an out-group category over their own group, working against the well-documented positive views individuals express toward their own group. Generally speaking, students were more likely to be neutral or extremely positive, with very few exceptions. Additionally, if I were to account for items rated 3, 4, and 5 on the 7-point scale as the neutral range, the percentages appearing in the results section may be considered as under-reported. Thus, if I restricted the negative and positive ranges, there would be even more neutral ratings (4). Doing so would further support the conclusion that students had a tendency to remain around the midpoint, hence exhibiting moderate bias. These are a few red flags of the possible discomfort and systematic manner of answering these sensitive questions.

At the end of the survey, students were asked if they felt uncomfortable with the survey topic or questions. Of participants, 30% admitted to the discomfort, and added such phrases as “just an awkward topic” or “not enough knowledge.” This led me to speculate that there may have been some individuals who held back on true feelings, and answered in a socially desirable way. Some may be racially averse, unconsciously holding negative stereotypes of Muslim women who wear the headscarf. Unfortunately, prejudice too often influences how we relate to

people we view as different. And, it is clear that the images of Muslim women not only affected students' perceptions of Muslim women, but there is a suggestion that it may affect their interactions with them. Even discussing this topic in an anonymous manner was uncomfortable for many students, as suggested in the survey feedback. An intervention including rhetoric about the diversity of the Muslim population is necessary.

Implications

When forming perceptions and first impressions about a person or group, *implicit stereotypes*, that is, unconscious prejudices, may affect the evaluations made and how a person behaves, even without the individuals' intention or awareness (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). Making a split-second decision of not interacting with a Muslim woman based on her dress or headscarf is not only limiting both individuals' experiences but also both of their development. A learning opportunity is lost, and the diversity in a multitude of attributes and attitudes of millions of Muslim women are reduced to a single item of clothing that then closes off interaction. By providing a more accurate portrayal of the diversity of Muslim women, rather than focusing on the negative anomalies, we may be able to increase intergroup contact and create a more inclusive society, both understanding and supportive of a diverse America. This begins by normalizing the images of these women in all avenues, starting with the media and education.

The media has a tendency to report on extremes, perhaps because such reporting is what makes news and drives ratings. It is generally about the extremely exceptional and the particularly negative portions of society, and sometimes about the average or majority when generalizing. Yet, when it comes to Muslim women, we rarely hear about the exceptional few, and are generally associated with negative headlines. These are then used to represent the average Muslim. Qualitative data from student's written responses suggested that these images

affected their perceptions. With the best of intentions, and the best of educations, many were operating on misinformation, perpetuating prejudice against Muslim women. Not realizing that even feeling sorry (as some students suggested) for Muslim women is a form of unintentional racism. The media and books play a major role in influencing racial attitudes. When the media upholds negative stereotypes, they promote prejudicial thinking. By contrast, programs that promote a positive view and understanding can help counter the negative stereotypes and raise awareness. Muslim role models should be included in discussions, books, and media.

As for Muslim women, those who are concerned with their non-Muslim peers' perceptions of them, understanding that color and style of dress matter may be useful in garnering a more positive evaluation. How a Muslim woman chooses to style and select the color of the headscarf has great implications on how approachable she seems. Wearing of the traditional black garments, specifically the "niqab" and "jilbab", may present the woman as unapproachable unless worn to include current fashion. Furthermore, a headscarf is preferable over a face veil on first impression formation by non-Muslim peers. The face-veil in this study supports earlier findings, regularly rated with the most negative perceptions on all scales, with one or two exceptions. The vast majority of students' written responses further supported these findings. Thus, my findings suggest that clothing choices can somewhat manage the inferences drawn, and in a way manage the social perceptions of a person who wears the headscarf.

Limitations and Future Direction

Because this study was only a preliminary investigation concerning perceptions of Muslim women by their non-Muslim peers, there are many ways to improve on the quality of the survey as a whole. In the future, this area of research should be considered to investigate how attractiveness, race, color of fabric, and level of coverage affect the overall evaluation of Muslim

women. Several suggestions for changes in the survey were discussed in the Summary of each section's results. One salient limitation is the quality of the images used. Instead of using images from the internet for Section V, future researchers should utilize student models, and have the same woman wear all three levels of scarf wear: scarf, no scarf, and face veil incorporating different colors of fabric and clothing styles.

A secondary limitation is response bias. Remedy for these biases is a forced-choice response format "yes/no." In that case, students will be forced to choose between two categories or pictures on any given scale. However, even with this change, it may lead to a socially desirable response. Another limitation is the sample size and diversity of sample. Future research should take care to have a more representative sample, as my current sample consisted of undergraduate students at a research-intensive public university and not representative to the general public. Nevertheless, I believe the findings are informative and give an impression of undergraduate students' perceptions of Muslim women. Another consideration to take into account is surveying a more diverse and bigger sample of religious backgrounds. This will help verify how generalizable these views are. Lastly, research in this field should be supported and not hindered, as I myself faced many issues and delays on an institutional level due to the sensitivity of the topic.

The current research findings indicated that most non-Muslims had a less positive perception of Muslim women who wear the face-veil in comparison to the headscarf, yet we have not considered Muslims' own views of the face-veil. Surveying Muslims' perceptions of the face-veil would further inform this subject. There are debates as to whether the particular way a Muslim woman chooses to dress is a cultural or religious practice. There are questions as to what extent the face-veil is practiced by the population. Another valid proposition would be to

investigate whether attractiveness for a woman wearing a headscarf significantly influences her employability and level of education compared to other women here in the United States.

Discovering how to use dress effectively to achieve the goals Muslim women have for themselves within everyday life in a society seems important.

One suggestion that came directly from participants in this study is to include more positive and representative images of Muslim women, and provide data showing the level of education for an average Muslim woman. Providing data of fields in which they work, and how they have contributed to society positively would be instrumental. Additional research would involve providing photos of prominent Muslim women bloggers, and testing students' perceptions of the women in comparison to the images provided by mainstream media. Research should investigate whether the reflection process, that seemed triggered by the survey, is instrumental in exploring best practices to correct misconceptions of Muslim women. Moreover, investigating the effects of providing students with refutation text about Muslim women, and testing for conceptual change and any bias. Research should look into the dynamic subtle forms of aversive racism that exists among Americans towards Muslim women. Finally, echoing other researchers' suggestions, researching the question of whether there are negative perceptions of religious wear for other religions and how it impacts the wearer's overall evaluation.

Final words

I hope that there will come a time where the headscarf becomes mere fabric, symbolic of modesty, where we listen to the expression of the mind behind the scarf, rather than fear someone we see as "other." In essence, this is what every human wants: to be heard and to be known for who they are and what they think, not the ideologies and images society and the media have forced upon them.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Section I

Response Approach Differences between Group 0 and Group 1

Group	Christian	Muslim	Jewish	Atheist/Agnostic
0	51.61 %	45.79 %	49.19 %	36.02 %
1	64.67 %	50.00 %	64.00 %	51.33 %

Table 6: Overall increase in positive ratings for each category of women from Group 0 to Group 1

Group	Christian	Muslim	Jewish	Atheist/Agnostic
0	6.45 %	8.87 %	7.03 %	10.22 %
1	6.67 %	16.00 %	6.67 %	24.67 %

Table 7: Overall increase negative ratings for each category of women from Group 0 to Group 1

Response Approach Proportions & Mean, Mode, and SD Data

Category	Positive Ratings (1-3)	Neutral Ratings (4)	Negative Ratings (5-7)
Christian	28%	23%	16%
Muslim	23%	26%	28%
Jewish	27%	24%	16%
Atheist/Agnostic	21%	26%	40%

Table 8: Section I: Aggregated Participant Ratings for each Category (Overall ratings)

Peaceful Versus Violent Scale Data

Category	Mean	Standard Dev.	Mode
Christian	2.79	1.17	4
Muslim	2.89	1.27	4
Jewish	3	1.33	3
Atheist/Agnostic	3.32	1.4	4

Table 9: Section I: Peaceful versus Violent Scale Mean, SD, Mode

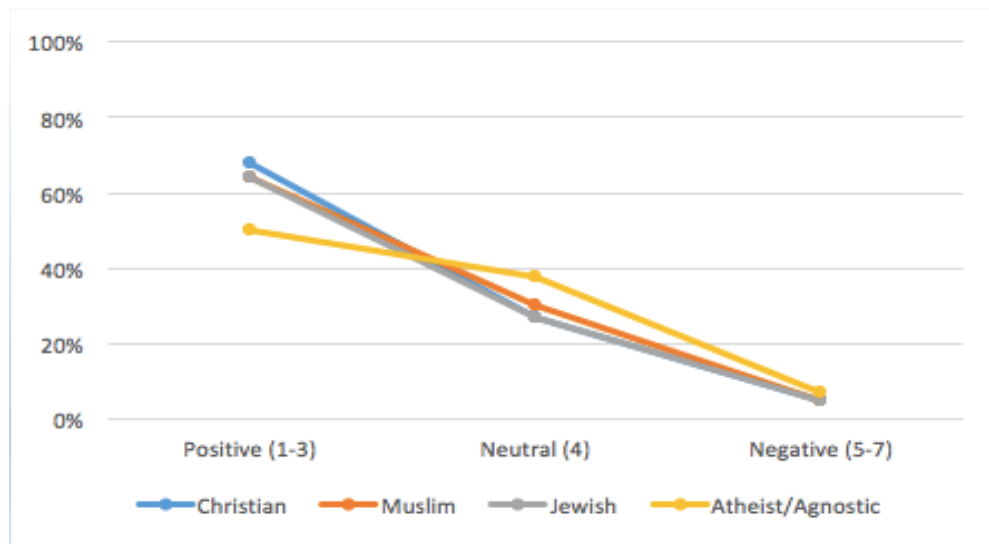


Figure 36: Peaceful (1) Versus Violent (7)

Category	Positive (1-3)	Neutral (4)	Negative (5-7)	Number of Neutral Participants (Gr 0)	Number of Neutral Participants (Gr 1)
Christian	68%	27%	5%	10	5
Muslim	64%	30%	5%	10	7
Jewish	64%	27%	5%	11	4
Atheist/Agnostic	50%	38%	7%	4	5

Table 10: Section I: Peaceful Versus Violent Participant Ratings for Each Category and drop in neutrality between group 0 and 1

Trustworthy Versus Untrustworthy Scale Data

Category	Mean	Standard Dev.	Mode
Christian	2.86	1.30	4
Muslim	3.05	1.31	4
Jewish	3.07	1.23	4
Atheist/Agnostic	3.55	1.51	4

Table 11: Section I: Trustworthy versus Untrustworthy Scale Mean, SD, Mode

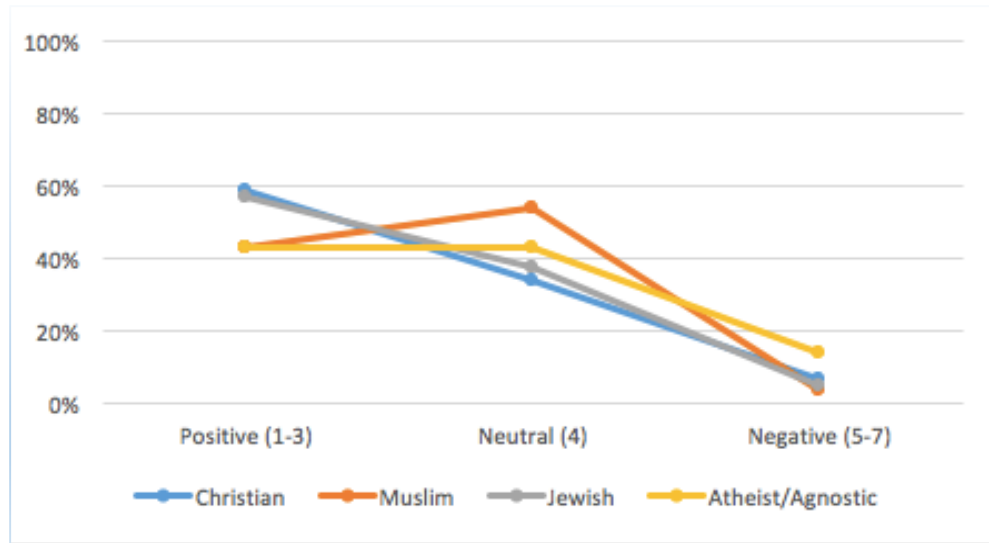


Figure 37: Trustworthy (1) versus Untrustworthy (7)

Category	Positive (1-3)	Neutral (4)	Negative (5-7)	Number of Neutral Participants (Gr 0)	Number of Neutral Participants (Gr 1)
Christian	59%	34%	7%	11	8
Muslim	43%	54%	4%	18	12
Jewish	57%	38%	5%	14	7
Atheist/Agnostic	43%	43%	14%	16	8

Table 12: Section I: Trustworthy Versus Untrustworthy Participant Ratings for Each Category and drop in neutrality between group 0 and 1

Intelligent Versus Unintelligent Scale Data

Category	Mean	Standard Dev.	Mode
Christian	3.29	1.28	4
Muslim	3.29	1.23	4
Jewish	3.05	1.25	4
Atheist/Agnostic	3.16	1.6	4

Table 13: Section I: Intelligent versus Unintelligent Scale Mean, SD, Mode.

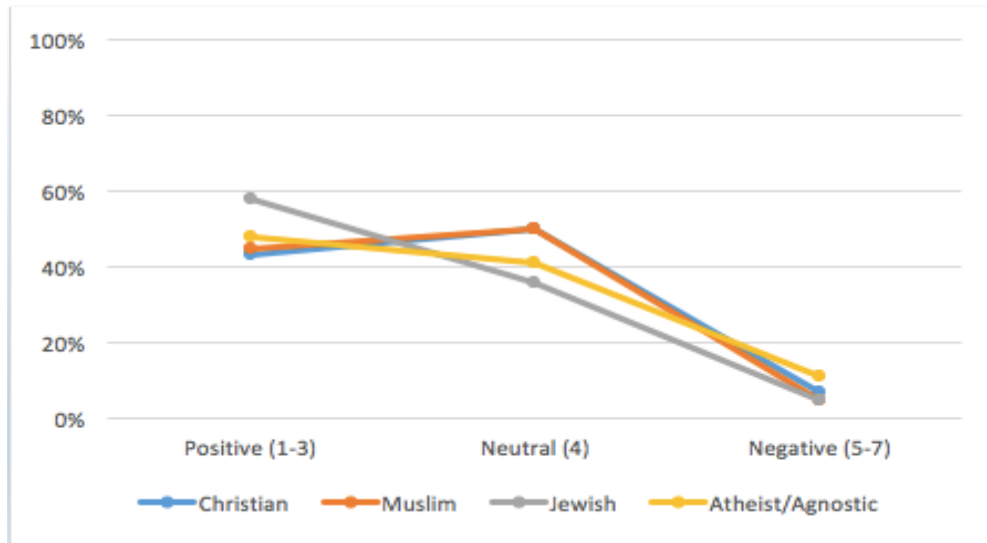


Figure 38: Intelligent (1) versus Unintelligent (7)

Category	Positive (1-3)	Neutral (4)	Negative (5-7)	Number of Neutral Participants (Gr 0)	Number of Neutral Participants (Gr 1)
Christian	43%	50%	7%	18	10
Muslim	45%	50%	5%	18	10
Jewish	58%	36%	5%	13	7
Atheist/Agnostic	48%	41%	11%	16	7

Table 14: Section I: Intelligent Versus Unintelligent Participant Ratings for Each Category and drop in neutrality between group 0 and 1

Honest Versus Devious Scale Data

Category	Mean	Standard Dev.	Mode
Christian	2.75	1.24	4
Muslim	2.96	1.33	4
Jewish	3.05	1.18	4
Atheist/Agnostic	3.46	1.37	4

Table 15: Section I: Honest versus Devious Scale Mean, SD, Mode

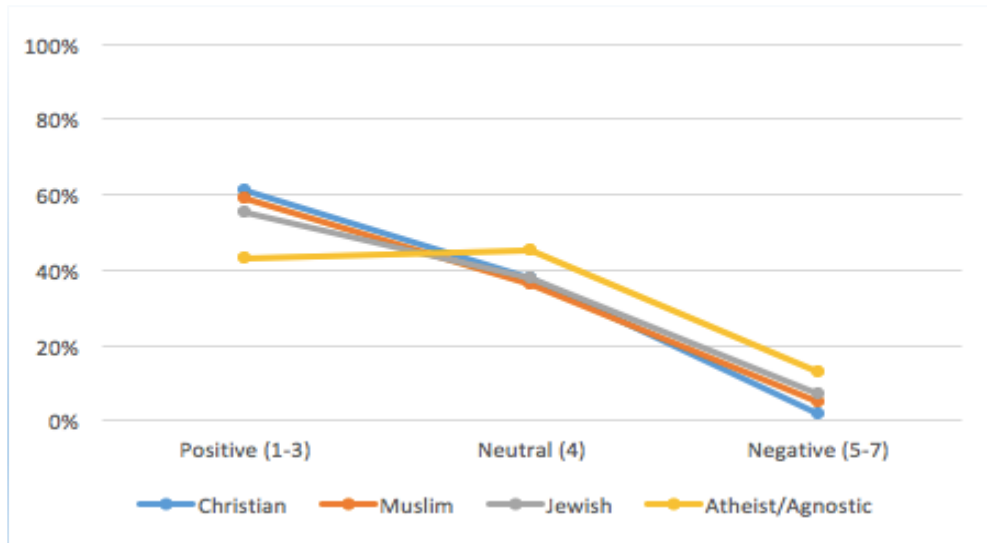


Figure 39: Honest (1) versus Devious (7)

Category	Positive (1-3)	Neutral (4)	Negative (5-7)	Number of Neutral Participants (Gr 0)	Number of Neutral Participants (Gr 1)
Christian	61%	38%	2%	14	7
Muslim	59%	36%	5%	14	6
Jewish	55%	38%	7%	14	7
Atheist/Agnostic	43%	45%	13%	17	8

Table 16: Section I: Honest Versus Devious Participant Ratings for Each Category and drop in neutrality between group 0 and 1

Devout versus Apathetic Scale Data

Category	Mean	Standard Dev.	Mode
Christian	2.77	1.16	4
Muslim	2.66	1.54	4
Jewish	3.02	1.30	4
Atheist/Agnostic	4.68	1.90	4

Table 17: Section I: Devout versus Apathetic Scale Mean, SD, Mode.

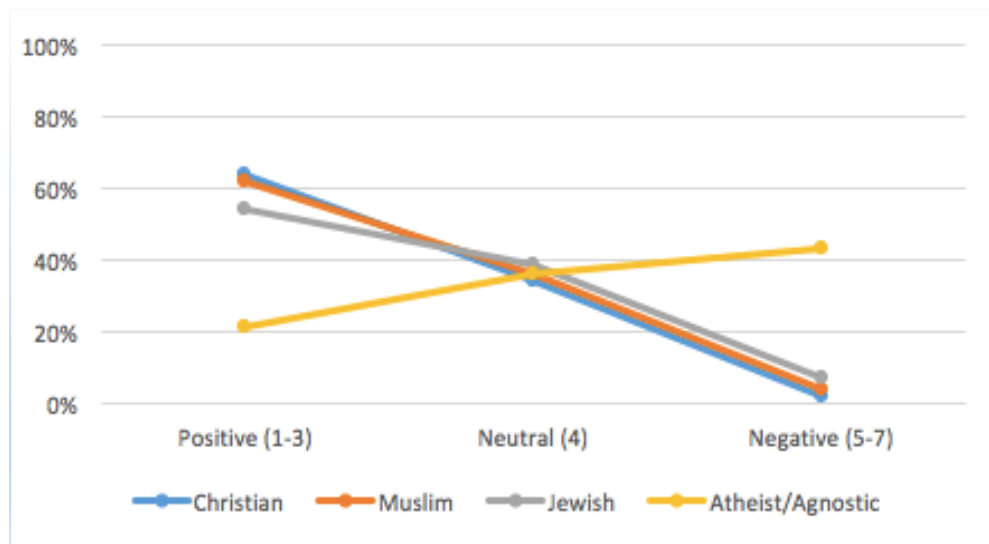


Figure 40: Devout (1) versus Apathetic (7)

Category	Positive (1-3)	Neutral (4)	Negative (5-7)	Number of Neutral Participants (Gr 0)	Number of Neutral Participants (Gr 1)
Christian	64%	34%	2%	13	6
Muslim	62%	36%	4%	14	6
Jewish	54%	39%	7%	14	8
Atheist/Agnostic	21%	36%	43%	17	3

Table 18: Section I: Devout versus Apathetic Participant Ratings for Each Category and drop in neutrality between group 0 and 1

Oppressed versus Unoppressed Scale Data

Category	Mean	Standard Dev.	Mode
Christian	3.25	1.60	4
Muslim	4.62	1.59	4
Jewish	3.28	1.32	4
Atheist/Agnostic	2.93	1.54	4

Table 19: Section I: Not Oppressed versus Oppressed Mean, SD, Mode.

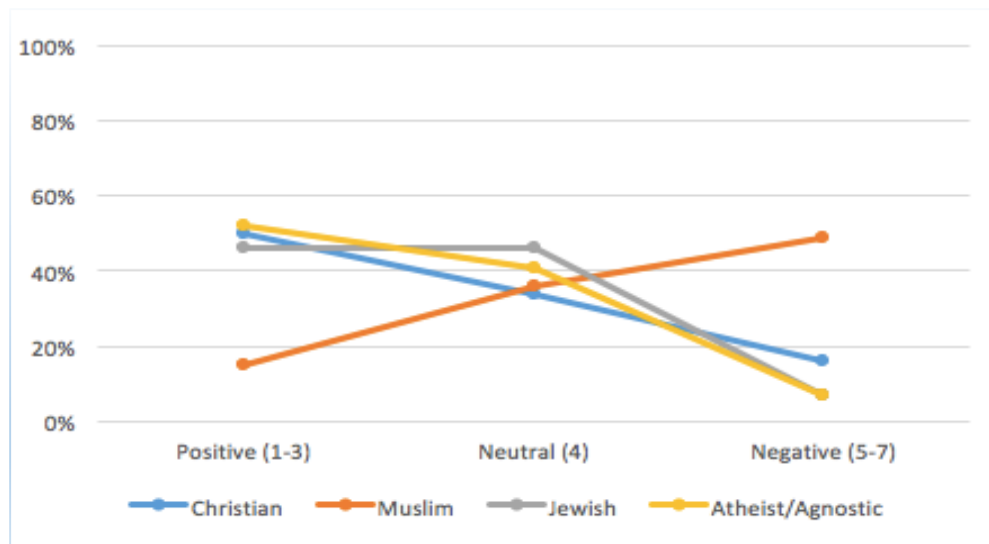


Figure 41: Not Oppressed (1) versus Oppressed (7)

Category	Positive (1-3)	Neutral (4)	Negative (5-7)	Number of Neutral Participants (Gr 0)	Number of Neutral Participants (Gr 1)
Christian	50%	34%	16%	12	7
Muslim	15%	36%	49%	10	10
Jewish	46%	46%	7%	15	11
Atheist/Agnostic	52%	41%	7%	18	5

Table 20: Section I: Oppressed versus Unoppressed Participant Ratings for Each Category and drop in neutrality between group 0 and 1

Figures for Estimated Means from SPSS Results

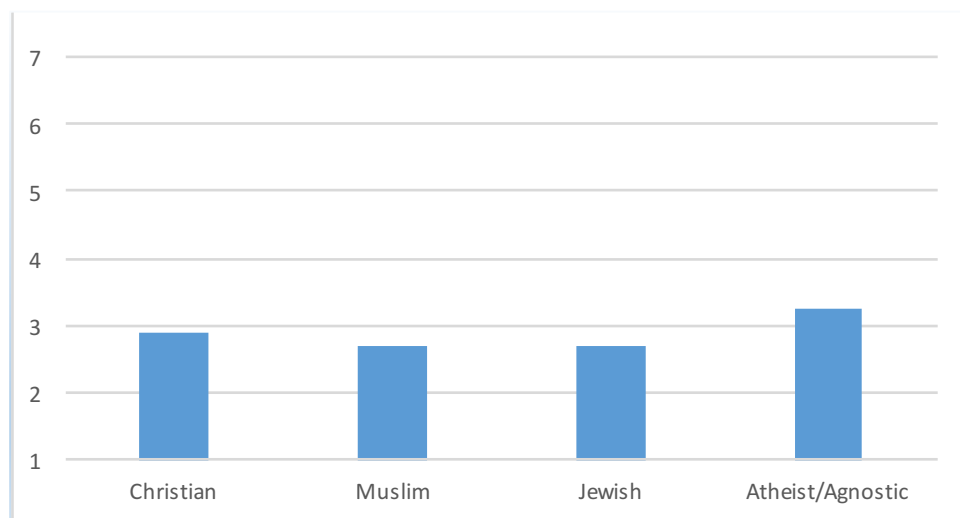


Figure 42: Peaceful versus Violent Scale Est. Means

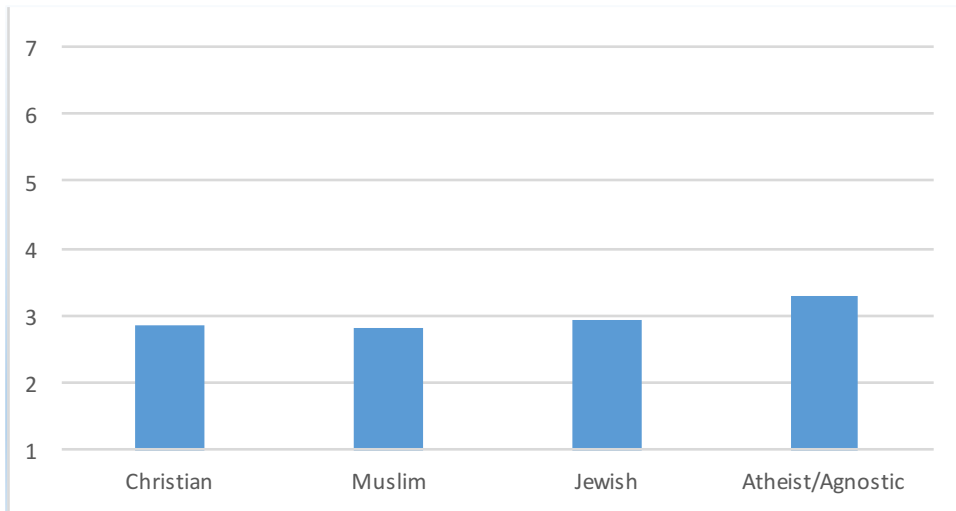


Figure 43: Trustworthy versus Untrustworthy Scale Est. Means

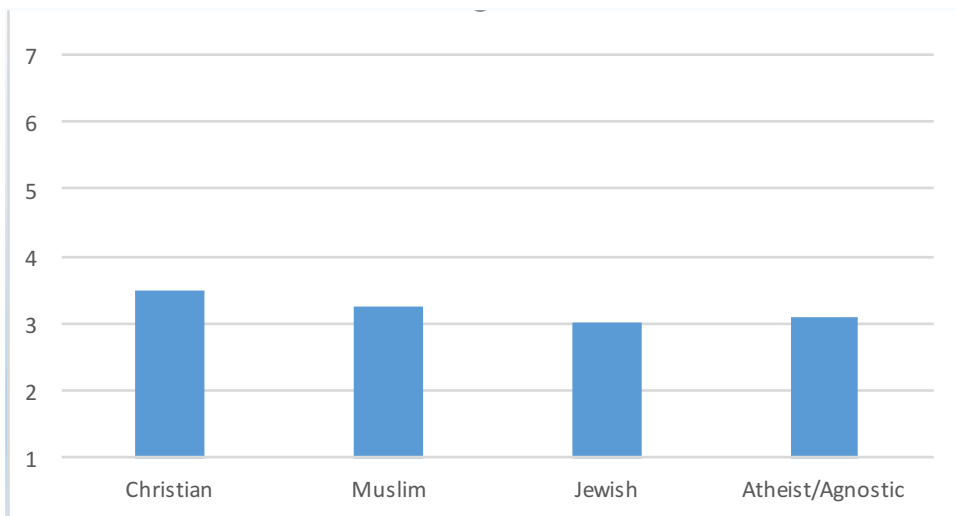


Figure 44: Intelligent versus Unintelligent Scale Est. Means

Group 0 versus Group 1 Differences on the Scale

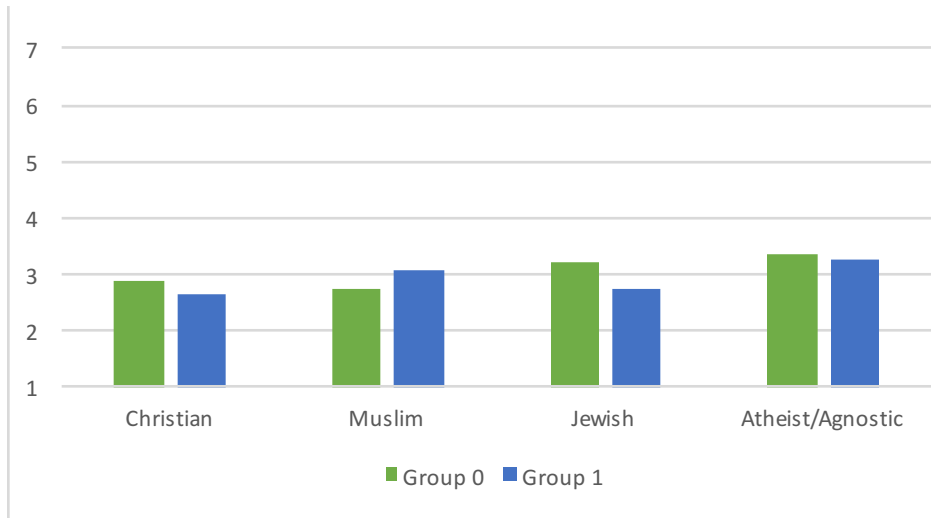


Figure 45: Group 0 vs Group 1 Differences (1) Peaceful vs Violent (7) Scale

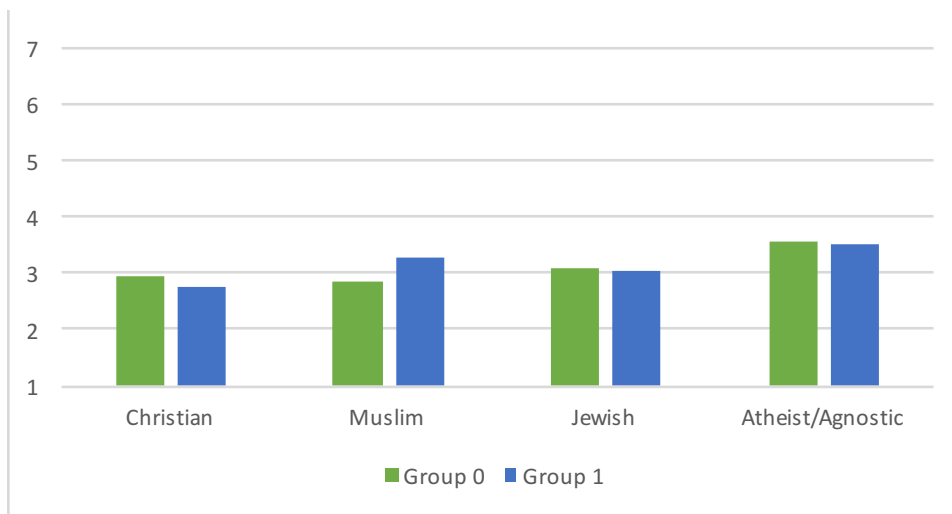


Figure 46: Group 0 vs Group 1 Differences (1) Trustworthy vs Untrustworthy (7) Scale

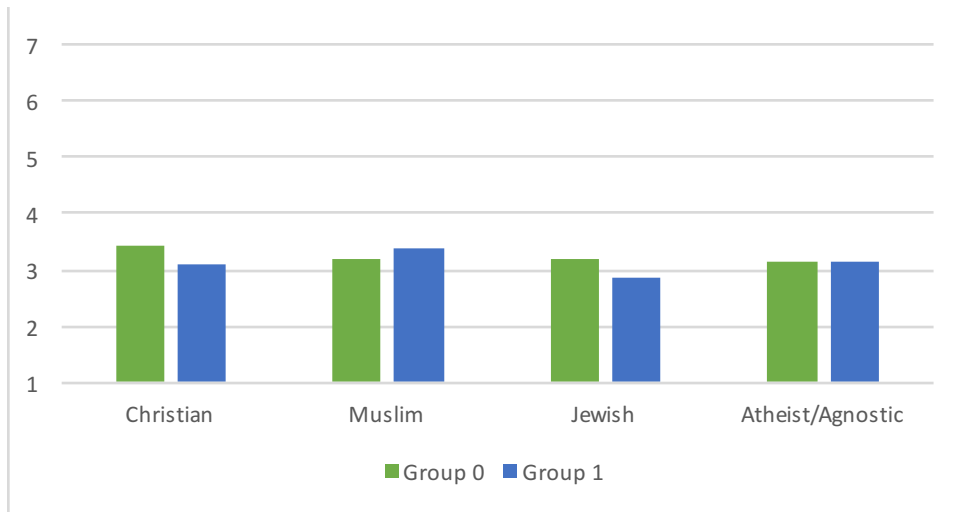


Figure 47: Group 0 vs Group 1 Differences (1) Intelligent vs Unintelligent (7) Scale

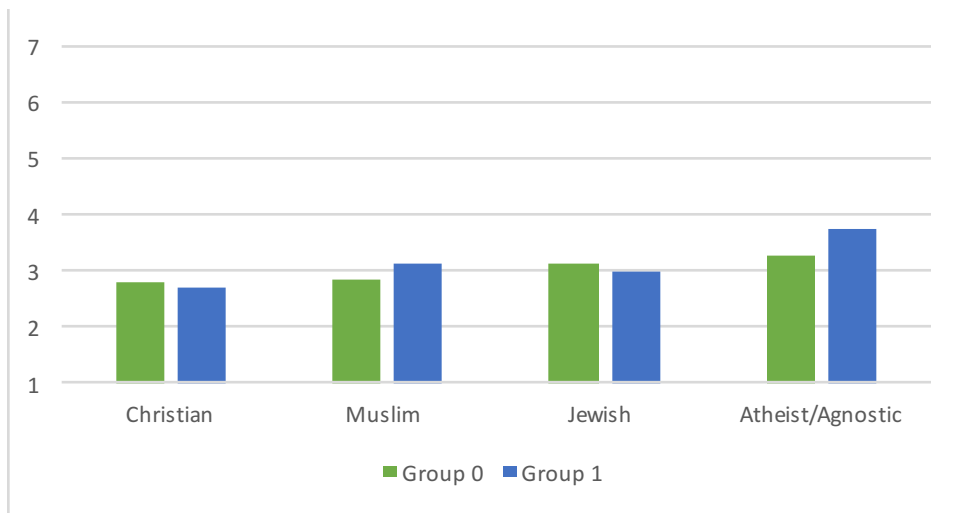


Figure 48: Group 0 vs Group 1 Differences (1) Honest vs Devious (7) Scale

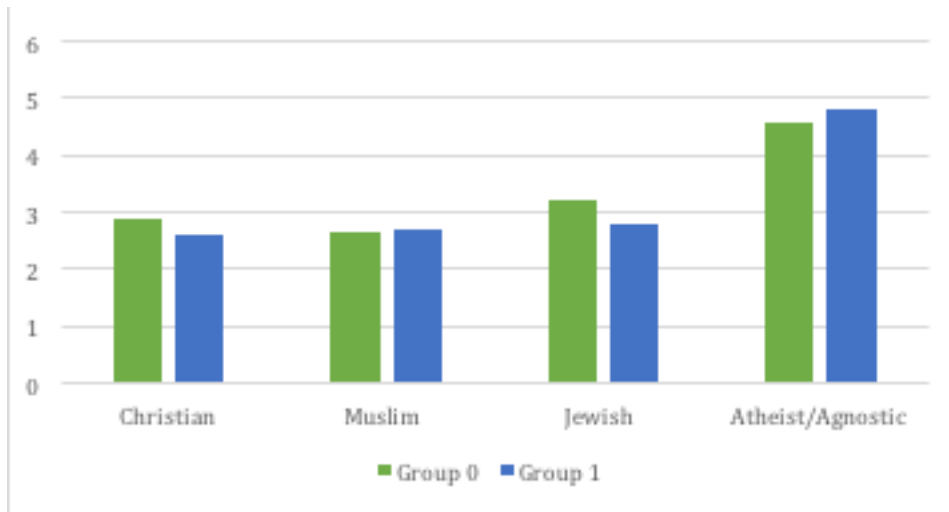


Figure 49: Group 0 vs Group 1 Differences (1) Devout vs Apathetic (7) Scale

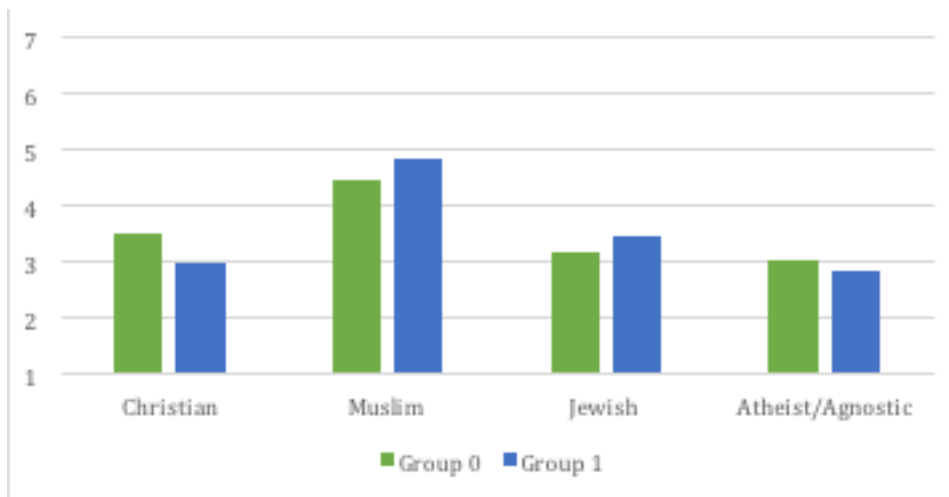


Figure 50: Group 0 vs Group 1 Differences (1) Unoppressed vs Oppressed (7) Scale

Appendix B: Section II

Qualitative Responses

Question 4

Q: “Do you feel discomfort or threat around female Muslim students who cover their face? Why?”

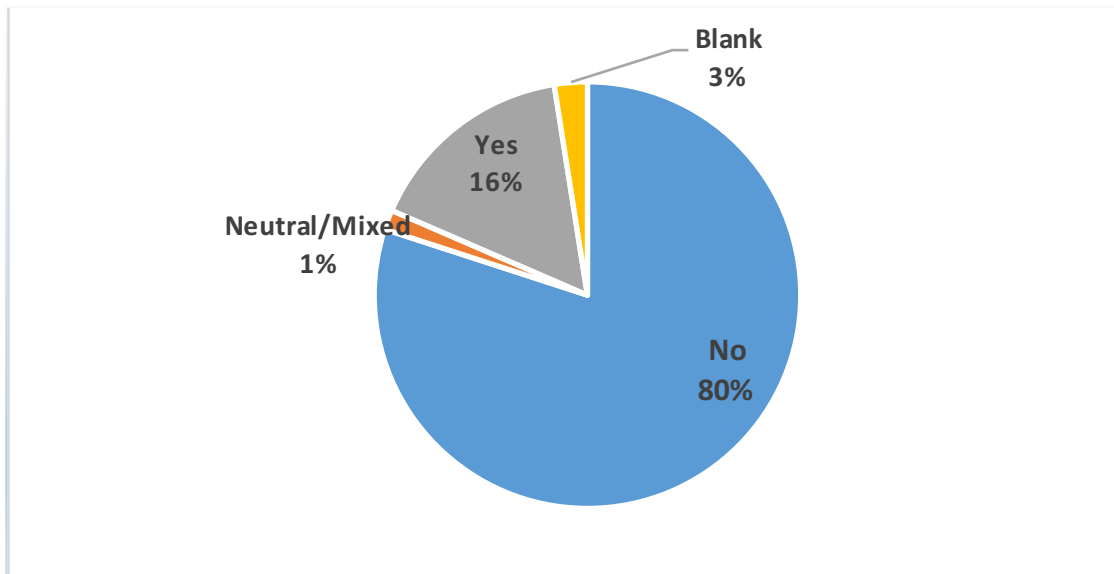


Figure 51: Proportional Data for Question 4

For those who did not feel discomfort, their explanations looked like this:

- Hispanic/Catholic: “No! It is part of their culture, nothing wrong with that. There are too many ignorant people out there that are very racist and naive about people: they make too many generalizations.”
- White/Christian: “No, it is their religion/tradition and I respect that.”
- Multi-Racial/None: “No, I think it is admirable. I don't know that I'd have the courage to be so obvious about or devoted to my religion.”

For those who did feel discomfort (or threat), their explanations looked like this:

- Asian/Christian: “Yes, personally just too covered and sketchy.”
- White/Christian: “Yes, the black freaks me out and the fact that if they were to do something they would not be able to be recognized because of their head covering. Also, media portrayal gives it a bad name.”
- White/Jewish: “I feel irritated. I think the Muslim religion is oppressive towards women, and that makes me very.”
- White/Protestant: “Not threat, discomfort. My discomfort comes because I can sense the discomfort of a fully covered Muslim woman who can only show her eyes in public, while white American girls sometimes wear hardly anything in public.”
- Asian/Agnostic: “Media portray, it's part of their culture and some people are just not used to it.”

Though some did not feel threat or discomfort, but still held some negative perceptions, for example:

- Latina-African American/Christian: “No, I don't. If anything I feel bad for them. Like they were forced to be hidden or something. The husband dominates and it's not fair. That's if the woman is older and has everything covered except her eyes. If a woman has her face open, just the head scarf, I don't think anything negative of it.”

This was coded as positive because the student said they did not feel discomfort or threat, however when reading further into her explanation there are negative perceptions of Muslim women who choose to cover. Similarly, another student said:

- Indian/Atheist: “not threatened but wonder why they do it. sometimes i have trouble understanding why (other than modesty) would want to cover face just because i would have trouble having to do that”

The few the remained neutral or had mixed feelings, had comments like this:

- White/Catholic: “I'm indifferent. I've seen many Muslims that cover there face.”
- White/Agnostic: “Neither of those two terms describe how I feel, though I do not necessarily agree with their religious beliefs, I respect that it is the privilege of any person living in American to dress how they like.”

Question 5

Q: “Should we ban the Muslim headscarf “hijab” on campus? Why or why not?”

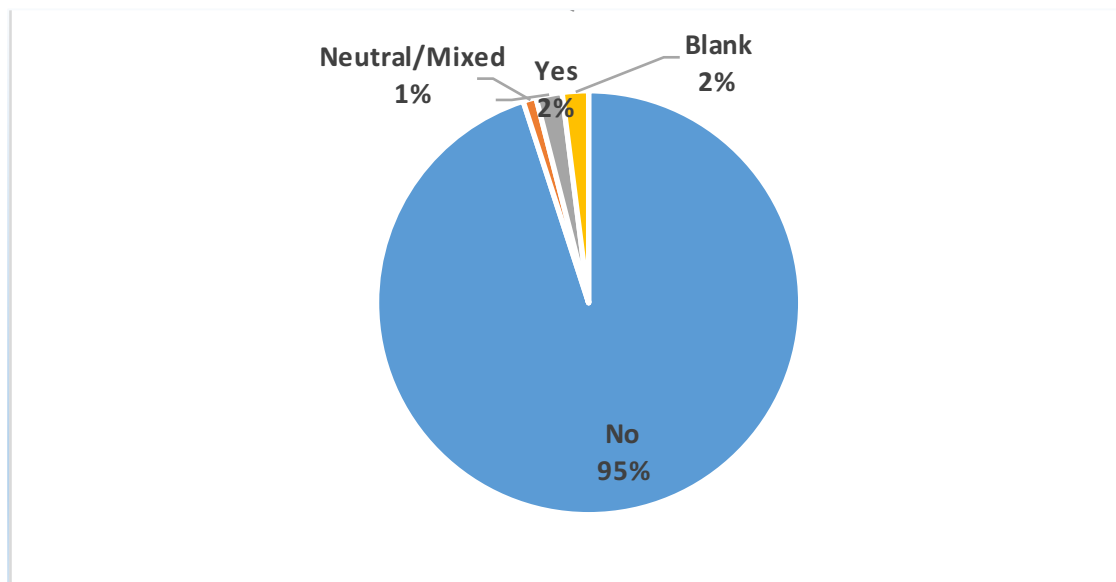


Figure 52: Proportional Data for Question 5

The overwhelming majority, those who said the “hijab” should not be banned responded similar to the following participants:

- Hispanic/Catholic: “No, why would you? Would you band a rosary around the neck of a catholic?”

- White/Christian: “No, that is offensive and discriminatory. A hijab has nothing to do with school and the University should not be able to restrict what people can and cannot wear.”
- White/Jewish: “Definitely not. The hijab is a religious ritual, and just like religious Christians are allowed to wear long skirts to cover their skin, and married Jewish women wear wigs, Muslim women should have the freedom of religiously instituted decency.”
- Black/Christian: “Absolutely not. It's a part of their culture.”
- White/Catholic: “ABSOLUTELY NOT. Excuse me for being a government major but this is an expression of her constitutional rights and by preventing an woman from wearing a "hijab" would be a great miscarriage of justice. Fear should not be a motivating factor in stripping any individual of their civil liberties and if UT were to instill a policy as such, the Supreme Court would strike it down in the name of the Constitution and for the sake of this democracy.”

Question 6

Q: “Does the Islamic headscarf “hijab” have negative images tied to it? Explain.”

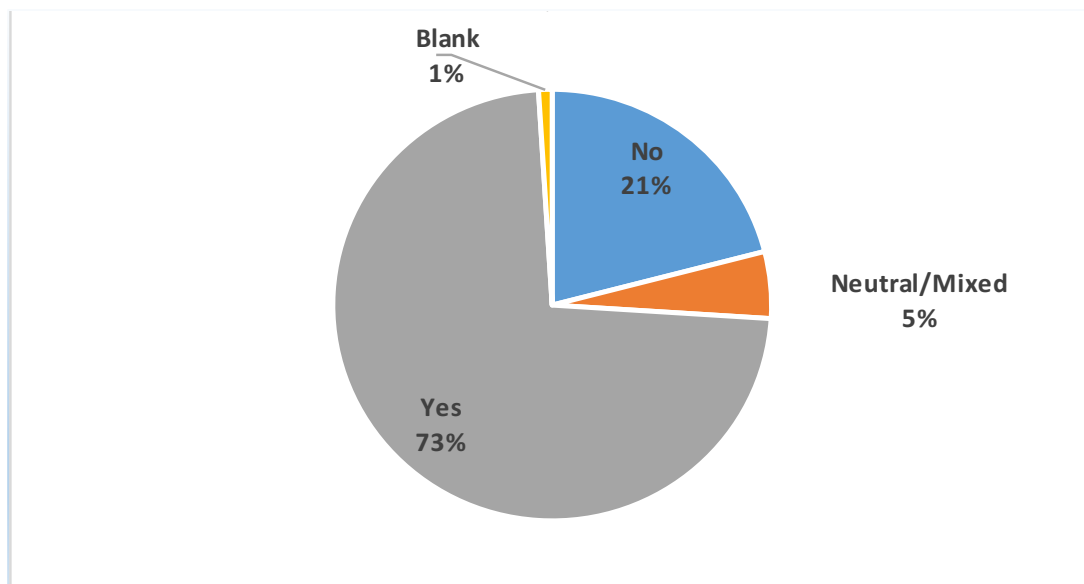


Figure 53: Proportional Data for Question 6

For those who felt there were no negative feelings attached to the headscarf, their responses looked similar to the following:

- White/Jewish: “I don't personally think so. However, with rising rates of islamophobia, especially in such a conservative state like Texas, I am sure a large population of people attribute it with negative connotations.”
- White/Catholic: “no, why would it”
- Asian/None: “No, If someone said yes, it's because of some terrorist.”
- Black/Christian: “Not really, if anything it can be seen in a positive light as well.”

- White/None: “I don't think so. I see more of a negative stereotype with muslim men having beards.”

Those who felt there are negative images tied to the “hijab, mentioned terrorism, oppression, and media portrayal. Their responses were similar to those:

- Mixed/Christian: “I think the media portrays them in a negative light, associated with terrorism and women being oppressed.”
- Indian/Jain: “yes, but it a structure of the media”
- Hispanic/Catholic: “yeah terrorist is what redneck americans think”

Those that remained neutral had similar answers to the examples below:

- White/Baptist: “I don't know the history or background tied back to the hijab.”
- Hispanic/Christian: “It could, but also crosses could remind people of the KKK in the South in the 50's. Any religious symbol could have negative images if tied to a negative”

Question 7

Q: “Have you seen any positive images of Muslims women wearing the headscarf or covering their face?”

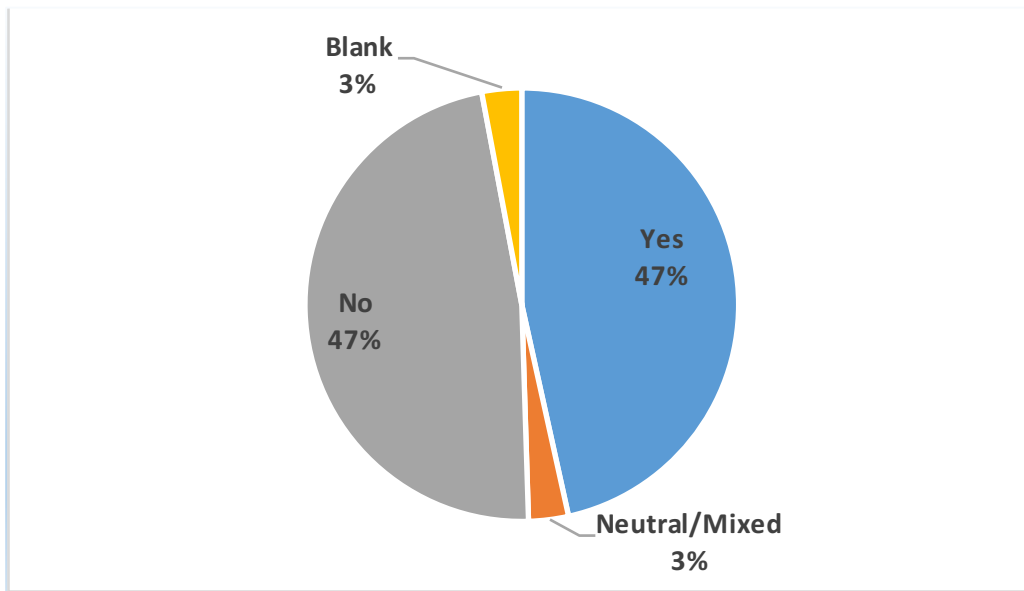


Figure 54: Proportional Data for Question 7

For those who have seen positive images:

- Hispanic/Catholic: “Yes, modeling images.”
- African American/Baptist: “Yes, in fashion magazines and runways”
- White/Baptist: “Yes, in support videos.”
- White/Atheist: “Yes, there is a comic book character, I don't remember the name, of a girl who teaches by day and fights crime in her hijab-based costume at night.”
- Mixed/Christian: “Malala as an educational activist”
- Asian/Atheist: “Yes when they are doing community service work.”
- Indian/Atheist: “yes, ballerinas in recent magazines and fashion models. most are seen as fighting against terrorism - but never in positive spun success stories.”

- Hispanic/Atheist: “There is a student who attends the University of Texas at El Paso who always wears her hijab who was recently a sun city princess and was incredibly proud to display her culture as well as honored for being selected.”

For those who have not seen any positive images:

- White/Catholic: “Very good question-- I have not personally seen any positive images of women wearing a headscarf.”
- White/Catholic: “Not that I can recall....”
- Hispanic/Catholic: “no, nowhere”
- African American/None: “I don't recall, honestly, maybe....but even at that it's minimal.”
- Multi-racial/NA: “No, not that I've seen negative images either, but the positive are even more rare. If I have seen positive images, it's been on campus in minority groups (like the GSC) that portray the hijab as it is.”

Appendix C: Section III

Indicate level of agreement with each of the following statements by circling the number that corresponds most closely with your own feelings:

(1) Strongly disagree Disagree Somewhat disagree Neither agree nor disagree Somewhat agree Agree Strongly agree (7)

1. I am more cautious and uncomfortable around Muslim women that wear the niqab (a face veil with only the eyes showing).
2. Most Muslim women are oppressed because of their religious ideologies.
3. We must help Muslim women, and free them from the oppression of Islam.
4. Muslim women are forced to wear the face veil or headscarf (Known as hijab or niqab).
5. I become concerned when I see a Muslim women wearing the niqab (headscarf and covering face, except for the eyes).
6. Islam encourages wife beating.
7. The woman in Islam inherits only half of what the man inherits.
8. Muslim women are oppressed and have little to no rights, unlike women in other religions in the US and democratic countries.
9. Polygamy is strongly recommended in Islam; a man can have a number of wives.
10. Muslim women are not allowed to have an education, listen to music, or participate in sports.
11. In Islam, women cannot share in the political life of their communities.
12. Women in Islam cannot work or own any businesses or property.
13. Muslim women must be stoned to death for adultery according to Islamic law.
14. In Islam women are respected and treated/regarded equally if not better than men, the problem is in the male-dominated patriarchal cultures not religion.
15. Muslim women can decide who to marry.
16. Islam promotes female genital mutilation, terrorism, and violence.
17. According to Islam, Muslim women are allowed to drive.
18. According to Islam, Muslim women must be segregated from men in public, work and places of worship.
19. "Honor Killings" are acceptable in Islam against Muslim women suspected of disobedience or sexual indiscretion.
20. Muslim women refuse to assimilate into the American culture, that's why they still wear the headscarf.
21. According to Islam, women cannot travel freely except in the company of a male relative.
22. I cannot identify with Muslim women that wear the headscarf or face veil.
23. Muslim girls are forced to marry very young in accordance to their religion.
24. Four out of the five countries with the largest Muslim populations - Bangladesh, Indonesia, Pakistan, and Turkey - have had female heads of state something the United States cannot claim. Women in Islam can and have been leaders.
25. Muslim women are strong and empowered by their modesty, because they are not viewed as sexual objects but judged by their character and thoughts.
26. Arab and Muslim are synonymous.
27. Muslim women are not bad, Islam has bad ideologies.

Statements	Mean	SD	Mode	Positive Responses	Neutral	Negative Responses
1	2.81	1.67	1	57%	28%	16%
2	3.99	1.56	4	29%	31%	40%
3	3.94	1.51	4	30%	38%	32%
4	3.64	1.44	4	34%	34%	31%
5	2.66	1.46	1	63%	29%	8%
6	2.93	1.42	4	54%	40%	6%
7	3.70	1.29	4	24%	64%	12%
8	3.69	1.55	4	36%	39%	25%
9	3.56	1.52	4	35%	48%	17%
10	3.37	1.37	4	41%	47%	12%
11	3.55	1.42	4	39%	43%	18%
12	3.40	1.41	4	41%	45%	14%
13	3.16	1.64	4	47%	40%	13%
<i>14rev</i>	3.87	1.55	4	30%	35%	35%
15	3.98	1.32	4	28%	45%	28%
16	3.16	1.44	4	48%	40%	12%
<i>17rev</i>	3.98	1.29	4	26%	52%	22%
18	3.69	1.38	4	34%	48%	18%
19	3.57	1.54	4	37%	43%	19%
20	2.96	1.42	4	55%	34%	11%
21	3.67	1.40	4	33%	47%	20%
22	3.42	1.60	4	42%	35%	23%
23	3.50	1.34	4	40%	44%	16%
<i>24rev</i>	4.32	1.55	4	35%	43%	22%
<i>25rev</i>	4.40	1.25	4	41%	43%	16%
26	2.94	1.57	4	52%	37%	11%
27	3.94	1.49	4	28%	45%	27%

Table 21: Item Ratings Analysis

Qualitative data collected from a final question in that section asking students if they felt they needed to clarify some of their answers -- “Any comments or clarifications/What are the general assumptions (based on media or your knowledge) about Muslim?” – 29 students answered with similar ideas as the following:

1. White/None-religious: “I felt very uneducated about muslim culture after answering these questions. Some general assumptions I believe the public carry is that muslim women are subordinate to their husbands and men. I do not believe that they are treated equally in their society.”
2. Hispanic/Non-religious: “Some general assumptions may identify Muslim women as submissive to their male counterparts and co-dependent.”
3. Hispanic/Catholic: “They are oppressed.”

4. White/Agnostic: "some of these questions are asking facts... idk what islamic law is so idk if i agree or disagree that the law says that... basically obviously oppression is bad and i think muslim women should be able to do/wear whatever the hell they want, but some of these are asking what the status of things are now. idk enough about society culture in islamic countries."
5. Asian/Christian: "Media makes the word "Arabic" synonymous with "Muslim", and that in turn affects the way I see the word as well. However, I think the situation in Islam culture is a lot different in reality than it is portrayed in American media; only the most extreme situations make the news here. Because I have Muslim friends, I understand that wearing the hijab is often voluntary because it is their culture, and not just because they're forced to by the men. I also don't think Islamic people are generally violent--it's only certain terrorist subgroups identifying as Muslims that tarnish the name of Islam by promoting violence. However, these observations are made by me having Muslim friends and reading the news; most of mainstream media here in American can paint a very terrible image of Muslim people and Muslim women, especially if the audience doesn't do their research and take the news at face value."
6. Hispanic/Catholic: "I do not know much about Muslim women, but I know that they veil their faces and are subordinate to men. However, I believe that practices have changed just as in Christianity and Judaism. I see women fighting for the rights of women in Islamic countries, but have also heard from the other side that being conservative with the female body is something that is valued by Muslim women."
7. Caucasian/Christian: "Although I am a Caucasian American, I grew up in the United Arab Emirates. I think this has given me a very different perception of Muslim women than many people in the US. In the US, it seems that many people believe that Muslim women who wear hijabs are oppressed and do not have a voice. This is also prevalent in the media (eg. Sex and the City 2. I honestly found this movie disgustingly offensive). I have noticed that people don't know very much about the Middle East / Islam other than what they see on tv and the news - which is usually very negative. Also, many of the ideas people have about Muslim countries are based on what they know about Saudi Arabia (ie women not being allowed to drive), which is not consistent throughout the Middle East."
8. White/Christin: "From the media, my perception of them is that they are all oppressed by their husbands and that their lives are meaningless unless they are married."
9. African American/ Non-religious: "That they are oppressed and need to be saved by intervention."
10. Mexican/Agnostic: "They are oppressed by their religion, but they don't understand it or care to change it. I think some people assume they're lame because that religion seems to have many rules."
11. White/Christian: "I believe there is a media bias amongst our culture. I think many Muslim women experience freedom and should not be associated with extremist ideologies."
12. Hispanic/Christian: "Based on my knowledge, Muslim women are vastly misunderstood."
13. Hispanic/Christian: "Muslim women are just like everyone else, they just tend to have a negative connotation because they are associated with terrorism."

14. White/Catholic: "They have no voice or choice, and can be dangerous."
15. White/Christian: "I don't know much about Muslim heritage and traditions"
16. White/Christian" "Radical, fundamentalist Islam is the problem, not all Muslims.
However just like the bible, the Quran has bad ideologies."

Appendix D: Section V

(1) Worried vs Not Worried (7) Scale

Image	Scale	Mean	SD	Mode	Negative (1-3)	Neutral (4)	Positive (5-7)	Sample Size
1	Worried	5.44	1.66	7	11	21	50	82
2	Worried	6.04	1.34	7	2	19	62	83
3	Worried	6.06	1.33	7	3	15	64	82
4	Worried	6.24	1.14	7	0	14	69	83
5	Worried	5.99	1.42	7	3	18	62	83
6	Worried	6.23	1.30	7	2	15	66	83
7	Worried	4.93	1.96	7	24	12	47	83
8	Worried	6.28	1.14	7	0	13	70	83
9	Worried	6.37	1.11	7	0	13	70	83
10	Worried	6.36	1.27	7	2	12	69	83
11	Worried	5.99	1.30	7	2	17	64	83
12	Worried	6.10	1.29	7	1	18	64	83
13	Worried	6.27	1.19	7	1	14	68	83
14	Worried	6.14	1.36	7	2	16	65	83
15	Worried	6.01	1.43	7	3	17	62	82
16	Worried	5.98	1.43	7	2	21	60	83

Table 22: Worried Scale Descriptives for 16 Images

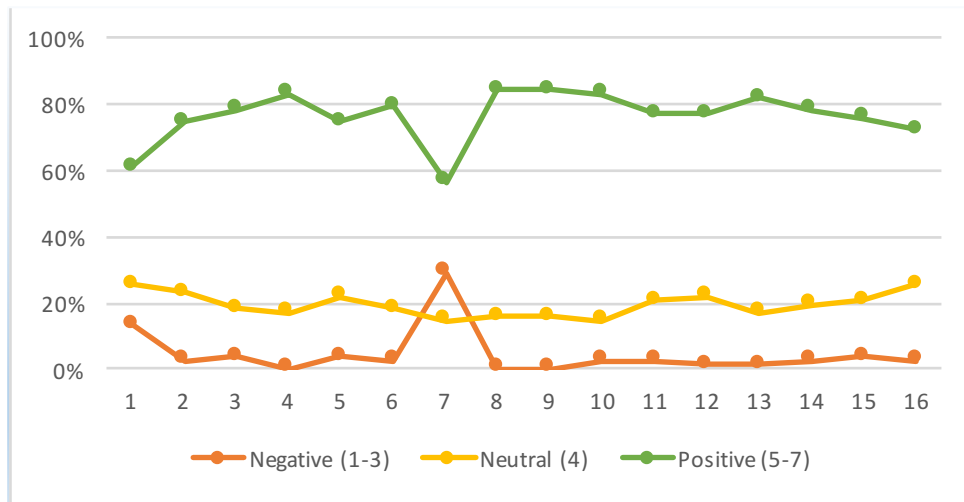


Figure 55: Worried Scale Ratings Across All Images

(1) Not Comfortable vs Comfortable (7) Scale

Image	Scale	Mean	SD	Mode	Negative (1-3)	Neutral (4)	Positive (5-7)	Sample Size
1	Comfortable	5.33	1.60	7	9	26	48	83
2	Comfortable	5.83	1.37	7	1	25	57	83
3	Comfortable	5.80	1.44	7	3	22	57	82
4	Comfortable	5.93	1.35	7	2	21	59	82
5	Comfortable	5.78	1.40	7	2	21	59	82
6	Comfortable	5.95	1.40	7	3	21	59	83
7	Comfortable	4.64	1.83	7	24	20	38	82
8	Comfortable	6.01	1.30	7	0	22	61	83
9	Comfortable	6.11	1.26	7	0	19	64	83
10	Comfortable	6.10	1.38	7	2	18	63	83
11	Comfortable	5.78	1.36	7	3	21	59	83
12	Comfortable	5.84	1.39	7	2	23	56	81
13	Comfortable	6.11	1.24	7	0	19	64	83
14	Comfortable	5.82	1.56	7	4	20	58	82
15	Comfortable	5.78	1.55	7	4	21	58	83
16	Comfortable	5.75	1.46	7	2	25	56	83

Table 23: Comfort Scale Descriptives for 16 Images

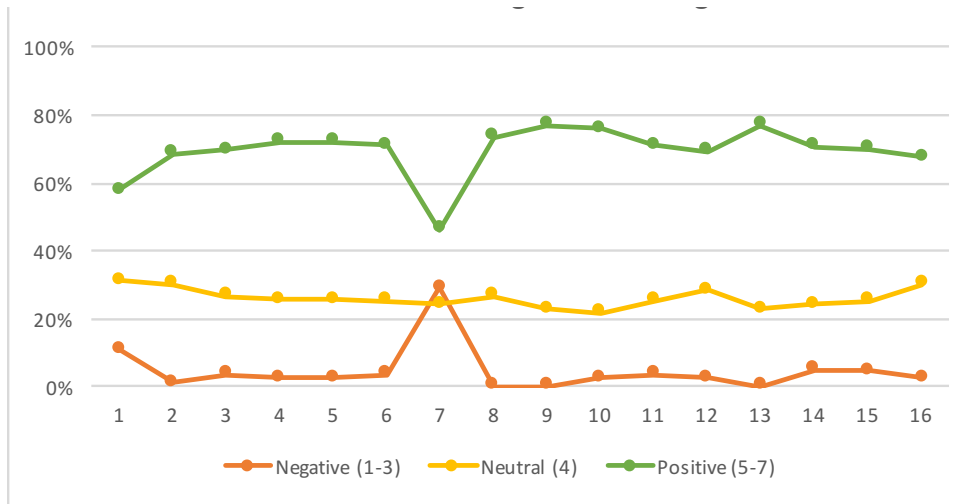


Figure 56: Comfort Scale Ratings Across All Images

(1) Not Sexy vs Sexy (7) Scale

Image	Scale	Mean	SD	Mode	Negative (1-3)	Neutral (4)	Positive (5-7)	Sample Size
1	Sexy	3.73	1.73	4	28	29	25	82
2	Sexy	3.40	1.36	4	34	40	8	82
3	Sexy	4.00	1.36	4	20	40	22	82
4	Sexy	5.11	1.41	5	6	20	56	82
5	Sexy	3.67	1.41	4	31	35	16	82
6	Sexy	4.68	1.39	4	12	29	41	82
7	Sexy	3.17	1.52	4	36	37	9	82
8	Sexy	4.91	1.36	4	5	31	46	82
9	Sexy	4.43	1.42	4	14	36	32	82
10	Sexy	4.83	1.38	4	7	27	48	82
11	Sexy	4.48	1.36	4	11	41	30	82
12	Sexy	4.32	1.28	4	13	41	28	82
13	Sexy	5.66	1.34	7	4	15	63	82
14	Sexy	3.90	1.58	4	26	33	23	82
15	Sexy	4.10	1.46	4	20	37	25	82
16	Sexy	3.94	1.41	4	22	42	19	83

Table 24: Sexy Scale Descriptives for 16 Images

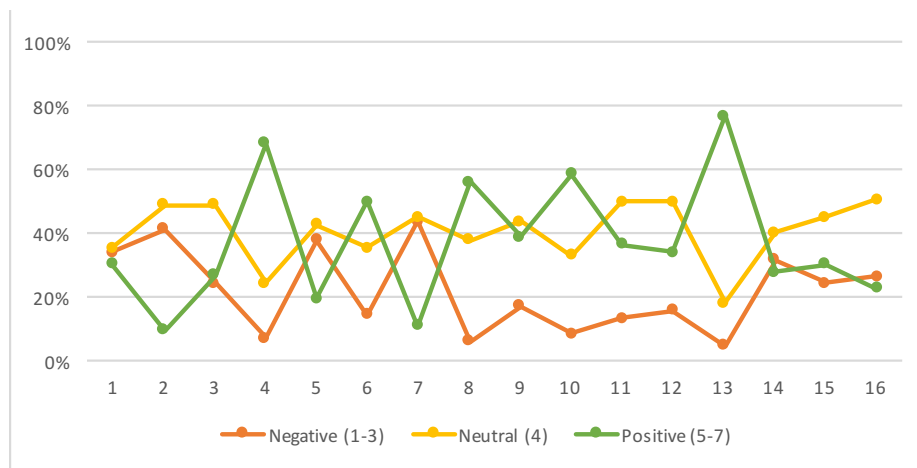


Figure 57: Sexy Scale Ratings Across All Images

(1) Not Beautiful vs Beautiful (7) Scale

Image	Scale	Mean	SD	Mode	Negative (1-3)	Neutral (4)	Positive (5-7)	Sample Size
1	Beautiful	4.71	1.67	4	14	23	46	83
2	Beautiful	4.52	1.66	4	17	29	37	83
3	Beautiful	5.07	1.31	4	6	26	51	83
4	Beautiful	5.78	1.31	7	4	9	70	83
5	Beautiful	4.33	1.54	4	21	28	34	83
6	Beautiful	5.06	1.41	5	8	19	56	83
7	Beautiful	3.68	1.67	4	27	38	17	82
8	Beautiful	5.64	1.28	7	2	17	64	83
9	Beautiful	5.10	1.34	4	5	29	50	84
10	Beautiful	5.47	1.32	5	3	14	66	83
11	Beautiful	5.05	1.37	4	7	28	48	83
12	Beautiful	5.10	1.25	4	3	28	52	83
13	Beautiful	5.98	1.16	7	1	12	70	83
14	Beautiful	4.59	1.81	4	21	20	42	83
15	Beautiful	4.63	1.58	4	12	34	37	83
16	Beautiful	4.49	1.56	4	16	34	33	83

Table 25: Beauty Scale Descriptives for 16 Images

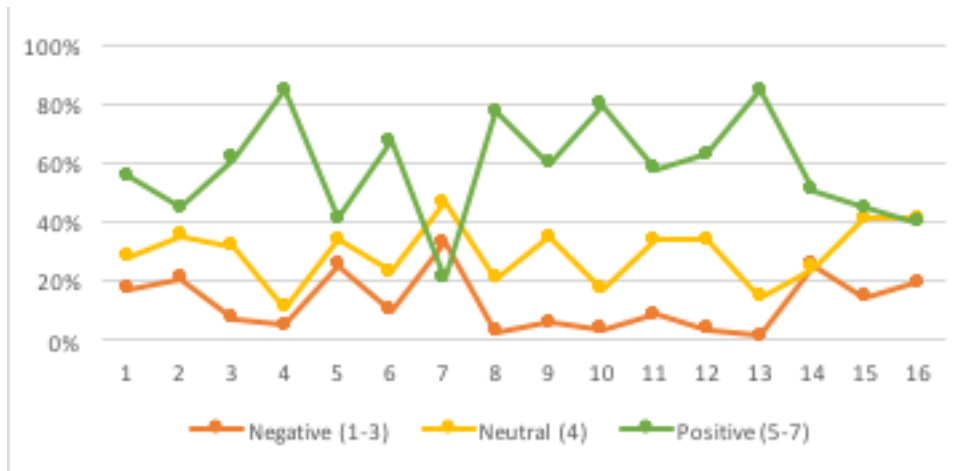


Figure 58: Beauty Scale Ratings Across All Images

(1) Uneducated vs Educated (7) Scale

Image	Scale	Mean	SD	Mode	Negative (1-3)	Neutral (4)	Positive (5-7)	Sample Size
1	Educated	4.51	1.17	4	6	46	31	83
2	Educated	4.78	1.20	4	4	42	37	83
3	Educated	5.02	1.10	4	1	33	48	82
4	Educated	4.96	1.15	4	3	34	46	83
5	Educated	4.43	1.19	4	7	49	27	83
6	Educated	4.58	1.14	4	7	40	36	83
7	Educated	4.09	1.36	4	15	46	21	82
8	Educated	5.18	1.20	4	0	33	50	83
9	Educated	5.36	1.17	4	0	26	57	83
10	Educated	5.17	1.28	4	1	32	50	83
11	Educated	4.81	1.21	4	2	45	36	83
12	Educated	4.90	1.09	4	1	40	42	83
13	Educated	4.94	1.22	4	3	37	43	83
14	Educated	4.84	1.32	4	5	40	38	83
15	Educated	4.70	1.32	4	8	39	36	83
16	Educated	4.57	1.14	4	4	50	28	82

Table 26: Education Scale Descriptives for 16 Images

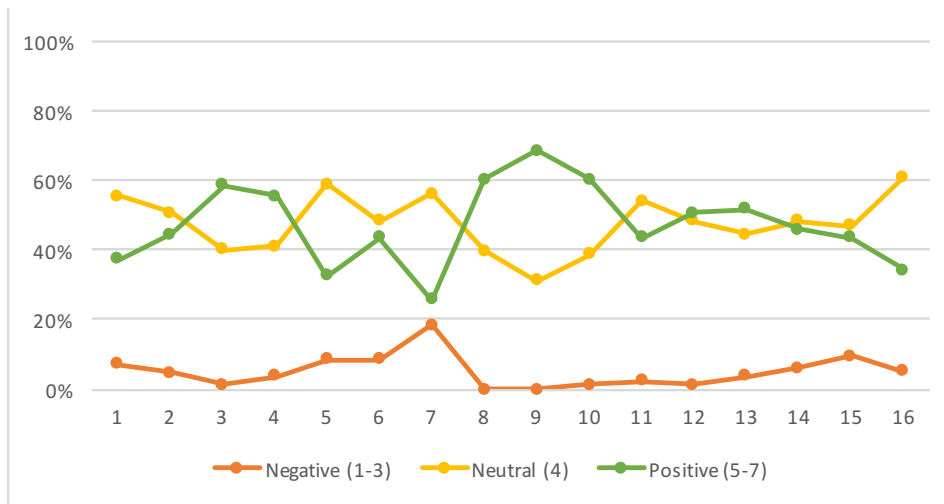


Figure 59: Education Scale Ratings Across All Images

(1) Dependent vs Independent (7) Scale

Image	Scale	Mean	SD	Mode	Negative (1-3)	Neutral (4)	Positive (5-7)	Sample Size
1	Independent	3.88	1.48	4	22	42	19	83
2	Independent	4.60	1.29	4	8	42	33	83
3	Independent	4.75	1.28	4	7	41	35	83
4	Independent	4.90	1.24	4	5	38	40	83
5	Independent	4.40	1.29	4	13	43	27	83
6	Independent	4.98	1.23	4	4	33	46	83
7	Independent	3.50	1.42	4	27	44	11	82
8	Independent	4.96	1.25	4	2	36	45	83
9	Independent	5.25	1.22	4	1	29	53	83
10	Independent	5.17	1.30	4	2	32	49	83
11	Independent	4.84	1.21	4	4	42	37	83
12	Independent	4.69	1.16	4	5	43	35	83
13	Independent	4.88	1.34	4	6	35	42	83
14	Independent	5.06	1.37	4	3	35	45	83
15	Independent	4.67	1.34	4	8	41	34	83
16	Independent	4.58	1.21	4	7	47	29	83

Table 27: Dependency Scale Descriptives for 16 Images

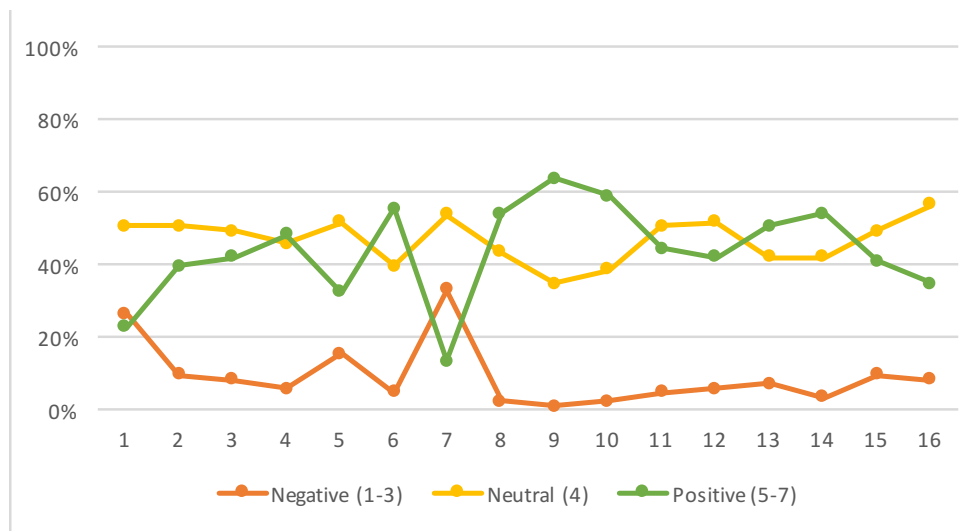


Figure 60: Dependency Scale Ratings Across All Images

(1) Oppressed vs Unoppressed (7) Scale

Image	Scale	Mean	SD	Mode	Negative (1-3)	Neutral (4)	Positive (5-7)	Sample Size
1	Oppressed	3.96	1.48	4	25	39	19	83
2	Oppressed	4.52	1.30	4	10	42	31	83
3	Oppressed	4.61	1.34	4	10	39	34	83
4	Oppressed	4.93	1.30	4	6	36	41	83
5	Oppressed	4.35	1.32	4	12	45	26	83
6	Oppressed	4.94	1.44	4	6	36	41	83
7	Oppressed	3.56	1.56	4	29	35	18	82
8	Oppressed	4.88	1.40	4	8	19	42	69
9	Oppressed	5.27	1.34	4	2	30	51	83
10	Oppressed	5.54	1.34	7	1	28	54	83
11	Oppressed	4.67	1.34	4	8	39	36	83
12	Oppressed	4.75	1.23	4	6	39	38	83
13	Oppressed	5.11	1.36	4	6	32	45	83
14	Oppressed	5.12	1.43	4	6	32	45	83
15	Oppressed	4.60	1.48	4	13	34	36	83
16	Oppressed	4.55	1.35	4	10	43	29	82

Table 28: Oppression Scale Descriptives for 16 Images

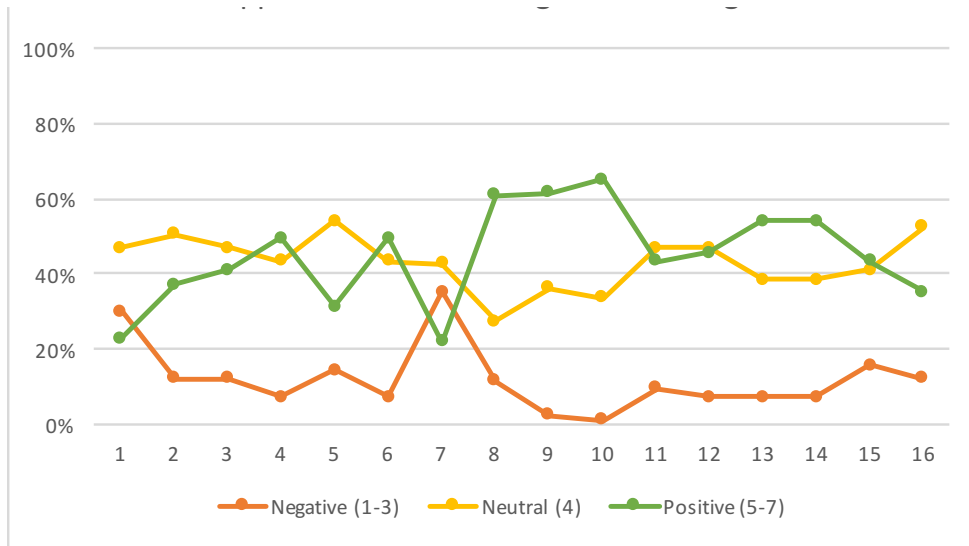


Figure 61: Oppression Scale Ratings Across All Images

(1) Peaceful vs Violent (7) Scale

Image	Scale	Mean	SD	Mode	Negative (1-3)	Neutral (4)	Positive (5-7)	Sample Size
1	Peaceful	4.94	1.38	4	4	35	44	83
2	Peaceful	5.17	1.41	4	4	29	50	83
3	Peaceful	5.18	1.26	4	1	30	52	83
4	Peaceful	5.24	1.36	4	2	26	54	82
5	Peaceful	4.82	1.44	4	7	34	42	83
6	Peaceful	4.84	1.39	4	7	37	39	83
7	Peaceful	4.17	1.47	4	19	40	23	82
8	Peaceful	5.24	1.34	4	2	30	51	83
9	Peaceful	5.52	1.26	7	0	26	57	83
10	Peaceful	5.47	1.33	7	1	25	57	83
11	Peaceful	5.11	1.28	4	3	35	45	83
12	Peaceful	5.33	1.28	4	1	32	50	83
13	Peaceful	5.45	1.23	4	0	27	56	83
14	Peaceful	5.41	1.30	4	1	27	55	83
15	Peaceful	5.19	1.26	4	2	33	48	83
16	Peaceful	4.91	1.30	4	4	36	42	82

Table 29: Peaceful-Violent Scale Descriptives for 16 Images

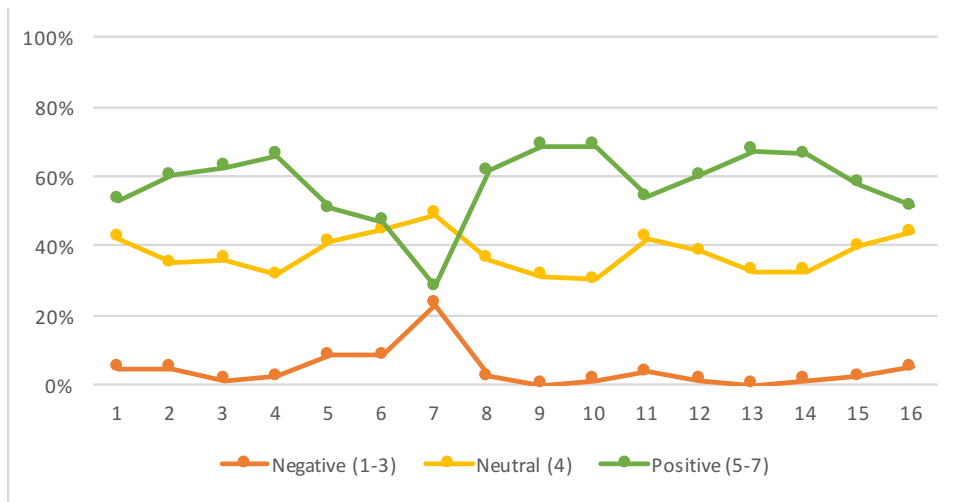


Figure 62: Peaceful vs Violent Scale Ratings Across All Images

Pairwise Comparisons

Image 3
With scarf

Image 10
No scarf

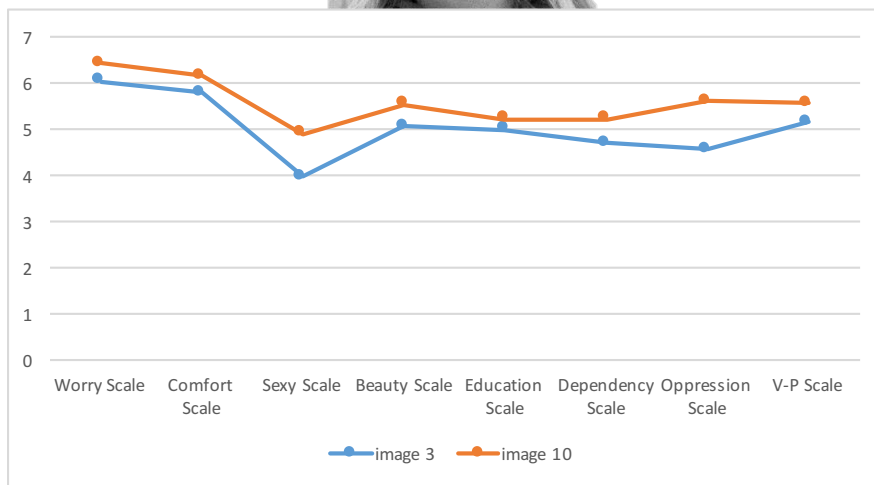


Figure 63: Comparing Image 3 to 10

Image 5
With headscarf



Image 14
No headscarf



Figure 64: Comparing Images 5 to 14

Image 6
No headscarf



Image 16
With headscarf



Figure 65: Comparing Images 6 to 16

Image 9
Non-white



Image 10
white

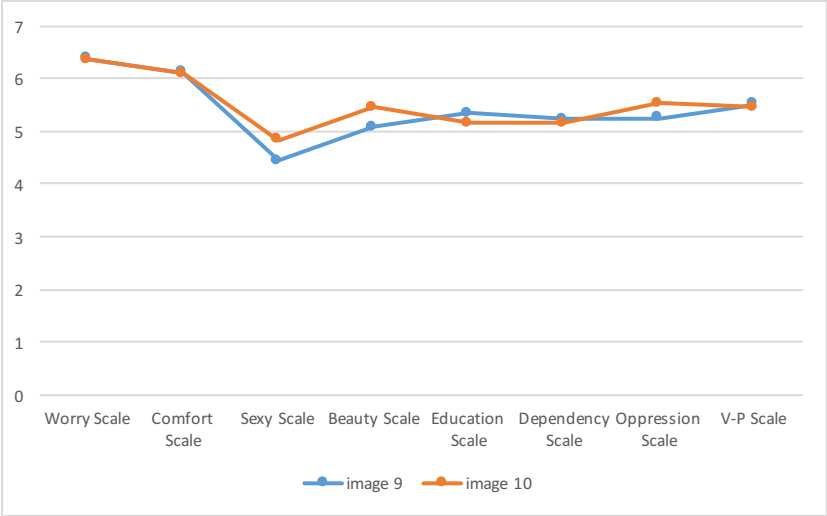


Figure 66: Comparing Images 9 to 10

Image 4
Medium brown skin
tone, exotic non-white,
neutral headscarf



Image 12
White/Light skin tone,
bright scarf

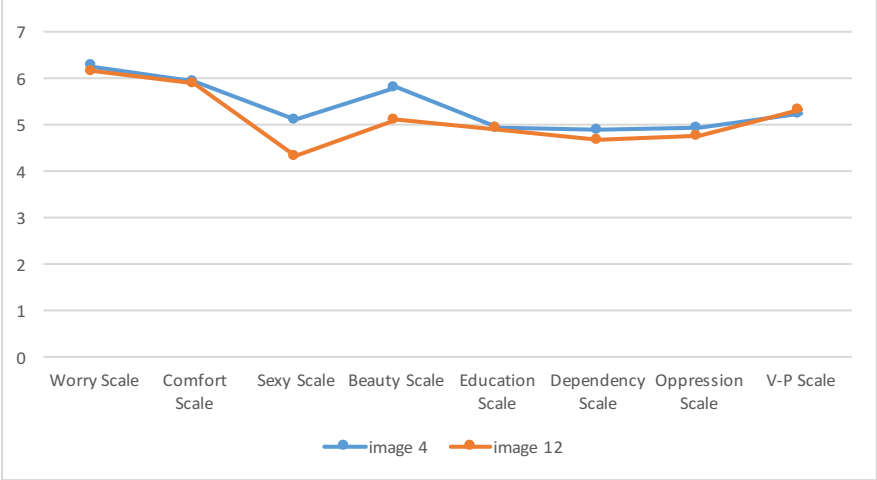


Figure 67: Comparing Image 4 to 12

Image 11
Black, black headscarf



Image 15
Black, red headscarf

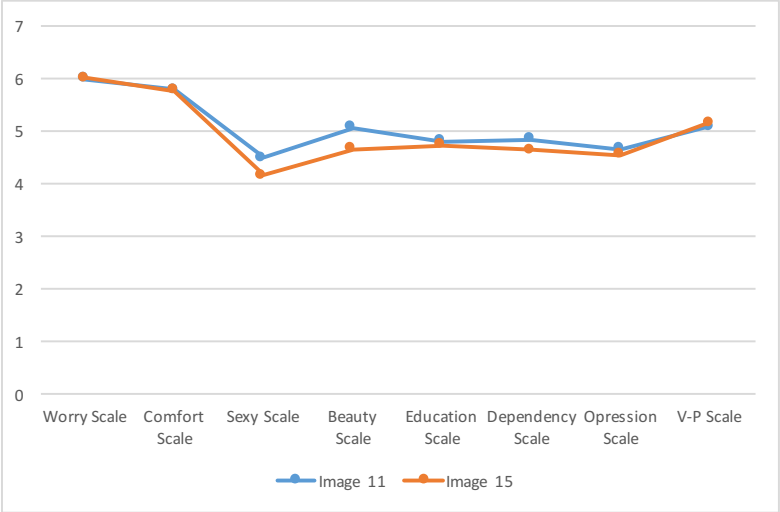


Figure 68: Comparing Image 11 to 15

Appendix E: Section VI

Question 1

Nine percent (9%) of students who answered this question said they prefer image (a). With similar explanations as the ones below:

- White/Agnostic: “while the girls face is covered, she seems to have a more joyful inviting expression on her face.”
- Hispanic/Christian: “a. she looks happier”
- Asian American/Atheist: “Honestly image A has beautiful eyes so she's a lot more pleasant to look at. If I were asked who would I want to talk to, I would also choose image A just because of her drop dead gorgeous green eyes. Girl B seems like a normal person as well and I'm not intimidated by either. For sure I would try to be friends with either but more so with A.”
- White/Christian: “(A) looks more pleasant... even though her head scarf freaks me out... Her eyes seem warm and the other girl looks rebellious and scary.”
- Hispanic/Catholic: “A. I don't like b's lipstick. It's uninviting.”
- White/Christian: “A . It looks more traditional and pleasant to be around.”
- Hispanic/Catholic: “I am not a big fan of dark lipstick so I prefer image A. I would feel more comfortable with someone in full hijab than dark lipstick. Image A looks like she is smiling from what I can see of her eyes.”

Sixty-five percent (65%) of students preferred image (b). Their responses were similar to the following examples:

- Black/Christian: “B. just looks more approachable and friendly”
- White/Atheist: “B only because there's less mystery as to what her emotions or reactions might be since you can see her whole face.”

- Indian/Christian: “If I have to choose it would be B on first sight because I feel like I could relate to her more immediately.”
- Mixed/None: “I prefer B, only because I love her lipstick/eyebrows. There is NOTHING wrong with A. She has gorgeous eyes, but B was more appealing to me.”
- Caucasian/Jewish: “I prefer Image b. Personally I do not have a problem with a niqab, however since it's not technically a religiously Implimented requirement I tend to associate it more with women being oppressed by a partriarchal society. I do not however feel that the actual woman in the hijab looks more pleasant, as the one in the niqab has a far more friendly expression In her eyes.”
- Asian American/ Non-religious: “Both pictures are pleasant and are completely comfortable to be around, but I prefer image b because she's wearing pretty awesome chains and her lipstick looks awesome.”
- Hispanic/White: “B, A looks like a terrorist, and I like to see peoples faces when I talk to them”
- Black/Baptist: “I would pick b, because she has a nice taste in style”
- White/Jewish: “I prefer image B, her outfit is really cute. I like the way she has a monochrome black color scheme and gold jewelry that really pops. it also looks like she is wearing leather pants which is really cool! The black headscarf and lipstick really ties the look together! / Picture A obviously doesn't have as much going on fashion-wise. She has pretty eyes though!”

Twenty percent (20%) of participants had neutral/mixed responses:

- White/Christian: “Both look pleasant. You can tell that (A) is smiling underneath her covering.”

- Hispanic/Christian: “Either picture is fine with me. The image B seems to be more cultured by having lipstick on and having a chain on. Seems to be more in style and following the norms of U.S. dressing cultures. Image A is also okay it's just that she is more conservative it looks like.”
- White/None: “This is a tough one. In A, I feel as if I can see her smiling with her eyes. However, with B I feel as if it is easier to read her expressions when communicating. The all black makeup also has an effect on why B is more unapproachable.”
- White/Christian: “I don't really prefer one over the other. I just like the girl on the right's lipstick a lot and I can't tell if the girl on the left is wearing any.”
- Hispanic/Catholic: “I do not have a preference for either a or b. I think I would be comfortable with either one.”
- Caucasian/Christian: “I would not prefer one over the other because they are both equal to me. For Image A, the only thing that I think about is what the rest of her face looks like. I am more intrigued by her mysteriousness and curious about her identity. However, these curiosities do not not ignite fear or anger, but presents an opportunity to learn more about someone who shows so little. For Image B, I can see that she has jewelry and lipstick on which are more commonly seen on women. I do not have as many curiosities about Image B because I can assume she is more accustomed to American culture.”
- Hispanic/Atheist: “As long as both female's are happy in what they are wearing that is all that should matter.”

Six percent (6%) of participants had negative response, where the felt neither image looked pleasant.

- Mixed/Christian: “B seems a little strange, it would be usual to see someone with a headscarf and that black lip stick with a gold chain and leather pants, I can't say I "prefer"

this versus A. I just assume A is a very serious Muslim. I would never personally wear either but if that is the attire that floats their boat then good for them.”

- White/Christian: “neither”
- White/Catholic: “this question is so dumb, I cannot see what the other girls face looks like so how am I supposed to prefer one or the other /”
- White/Atheist: “Neither effect me whatsoever.”

Question 2

Responses commenting on choice versus being forced:

- White/Christian: “The Catholic Christian nuns are viewed as extremely religious women who follow the laws of God. They are viewed positively in most cultures. The women on the right are occasionally treated differently, because they are connected to terrorism and oppression.”
- Asian/Atheist: “Because nuns are portrayed as devout women who made a decision to become one while the Muslim women seem like they're required to.”
- Mixed/Christian: “Catholic nuns live that lifestyle because they chose to put themselves in that predicament. Whereas Muslim women are often treated poorly by men due to their religion and have no choice in religion.”
- Latino/Catholic: “In my opinion, because nuns chose to devote their lives to their religion but are not expected to do so from birth, which is a common conception of Muslim women.”
- White/Jewish: “I think the reason is because Catholic-Christian is viewed as choice while Muslim is thought to be forced. Although that is most likely incorrect, I think it has a lot to do with how we view the Arab society as a whole.”

- White/Catholic: “Catholic nuns are different in the sense that these women make the choice as an adult to become devoted to their faith and devoted to Christ. When Muslim women reach puberty they are told that's what they must wear and must remain covered. I think they're both devoted, but I think there's a lack of choice for a lot of Muslim women especially in oppressive countries about how much they have to cover.”

Foreign versus norm. Eleven students (10%) of students made this comment type.

- Asian/Christian: “In general, I think people are generally deem more safe that which they are more familiar with. Living in a western country (America), Catholic-Christian imagery is more prevalent and is generally more well accepted in here. On the other hand, Muslim imagery and culture is more foreign to us, and therefore feels more unknown and dangerous.”
- Hispanic/Christian: “I'm not sure why they're treated differently. One reason might be that this countries views itself as a Christian country, even though I don't think it is, and the nun is a more common image. In my eyes there is no difference between the two pictures.”
- Asian/Atheist: “Because one we are more familiar with as a Western culture and the other we closely associate with terrorism.” (Note: this comment was double coded for both this theme and a theme of association with terrorism/negative perceptions)
- Hispanic/Catholic: “Because Catholicism and Christianity is seen as the norm I think that's why it is okay. Muslim is a newer concept to the U.S.”
- White/Christian: “I think its because we live in a western civilization that has deep roots in Christianity. Its far easier to have an "us vs. them" mentality when you don't understand the other people in question. It also could be because we see less nuns, so

they're glamorized as being "saintly" whereas regular everyday Muslim women wear their garments.”

Eight participants (7%) mentioned male-dominance while explaining their view of why the two women are treated differently (some of these responses were double coded):

- Hispanic/Catholic: “I think the way they are differently treated and seen is due to the male roles in their life. I do not know enough about the Muslim religion to be able to openly opiniate on their actions.”
- White/Christian: “I think this is due to the fact that in America, Christianity is still seen as the dominant religion, even though in our Constitution we do not have a set religion. I think a lot of times Americans categorize all Muslims in the same way, so if there is one small radical group among millions of other peaceful people, they are automatically demonized and seen as people that you shouldn't associate with. There is also a stereotype that Muslim women are oppressed and held down by their husbands, so this is also an issue in this circumstance.” (this was double coded, for the next comment type about generalization/stereotypes)
- White/Protestant: “Because women are not oppressed in the Catholic faith; Muslim women are oppressed by their male counterparts. / / I think the problem here is not the women in the religion, it is the men. Catholic men do not oppress their women, but Muslim men oppress their women. Again, probably due to the statutes against women within the Muslim religion.”
- Hispanic/Christian: “... Most people did not necessarily view Muslims in a negative light before 9/11, but after that, the stereotype remained and caused many women within the

culture to become the objects of some sort of male dominated oppressive force of terrorism.”

- Asian/Christian: “muslim women wear that because of their husbands...catholic women wear it because of their religion”

Sixty-seven participants (63%) participants mentioning negative perceptions due to bigotry, discrimination, stigma, double standards, misconceptions, etc.:

- Latina/Christian: “They are treated and seen differently because of the cultural stereotypes that have been put in place by society. These systems allow for one faith to operate under goodness and the other to invoke fear though they share similarities.”
- Hispanic/Catholic: “The stigma America has created about Muslim women and the Muslim culture in general is that they need help or saving. Americans also assume that anything they do or believe in is right and everyone should do the same.”
- White/Spiritual: “I think it's a cultural difference and how Americans have been socialized to see Muslim women. I also think it's a sneaky way to convince Americans that Muslim women need to be Westernized in order to "save" them from the perils of Islam.”
- Indian/Jain: “Muslims are treated like crap because the media caters to the stupidity of people that exist in a 24/7 cable news environment. Hypocrisy is rampant and the idiots still go for it.”
- White/Christian: “I think this is due to the fact that in America, Christianity is still seen as the dominant religion, even though in our Constitution we do not have a set religion. I think a lot of times Americans categorize all Muslims in the same way, so if there is one small radical group among millions of other peaceful people, they are automatically demonized and seen as people that you shouldn't associate with. There is also a

stereotype that Muslim women are oppressed and held down by their husbands, so this is also an issue in this circumstance.” (note: this was a comment that was double coded for both this theme and “male-role” theme)

- White/Atheist: “Because the media makes them seem very different, when in reality they aren't.”
- Hispanic/Christian: “Because of the media portraying all muslims in a negative fashion, people get this inaccurate image in their heads of what muslims are and generally think catholic-christians are better, even though they practice the same things at certain points.”
- Asian/Atheist: “The prejudice against the Muslim women leads people to think that the Muslim women are being oppressed when showing religious devoutness.”
- Hispanic/Catholic: “Muslim faith seems to be attached with acts of terrorism so that skews the way we look at the Muslim woman in the picture.”
- White/Christian: “Because of different events historically in which the media has shown Islamic women to be oppressed or endure hardships based on their religion.”
- White/Christian: “I'm sure it has something to do with the negative stereotypes that are connected to Muslims.”
- White/Christian: “The Catholic Christian nuns are viewed as extremely religious women who follow the laws of God. They are viewed positively in most cultures. The women on the right are occasionally treated differently, because they are connected to terrorism and oppression.”
- Indian/Christian: “It is all about the religion. Not all Catholics become nuns. Therefore it is more selective which is seen as more devout. Since more Muslim women wear hijabs and burkas it is seen as more widely-recognizable with Islam.”

- African American/Christian: “The devout as part of being catholic-christian come off as more friendly the the oppressed”
- White/Catholic: “I have never compared these two types of images, but it really makes you think. My only reasoning could be that there are only a few Catholic-Christian nuns that devote themselves entirely, but it is Muslim culture for women to dress like this all of the time.”
- Asian/Catholic: “They are treated differently because each woman is held a different standard in their respective religions. The nun has power and respect in the Christian religion, while the common woman in the Muslim religion has no special authority.”
- African American/Baptist: “The reputation of the Catholic-Christian and Muslim differ because one has a peaceful history and the other does not.”
- Asian/Hindu: “Islam is seen as a religion that endorses female oppression. Wearing the veil, hijab, or similar is a repression of female expression. Likewise, the female oppression practices is predominant and continues in the modern world. In current days nations such as Saudi Arabia still enforces laws of female oppression. Even if Christianity in the past oppressed women, the modern world nowhere does Christianity espouses strong female oppression on a large, national scale.”
- White/Baptist: “The muslim history gives them a bad reputation. Thats why they are mistreated.”
- Asian/None: “Because most people see Muslim as violent, and oppressed unlike normal people.”

Some participants mentioned race as a factor (7%):

- Asian American/Agnostic: “Because people believe that the Muslim race is related with terrorism.”

- Black/African: “Because one is white and the other isn't.”
- White/Jewish: “I think Catholic women who have lighter skin are looked at in a more positive light versus Muslim women with darker skin. Darker skin and a scarf that covers their face can be seen as intimidating. Also, since most people are Catholic they're not judged as much.”
- Asian/Christian: “I've never actually noticed the hypocrisy of this! I believe that they're treated differently because of the simple thing it boils down to: race. The United States has traditionally been Caucasian, Christian/Catholic-dominated, and nuns are accepted/treated with reverence and seen in a good light. Muslim women, however, covered in the same amount of cloth, face a different perception because of instances in the media where cases of Muslim women not wanting to wear the scarf is blown out of proportion.” (this was double coded for the previous stereotypes theme as well)
- Asian/None: “A Catholic-Christian woman and a Muslim woman are treated differently because of our society's foundation of rich old white men decided that people who don't look like them are less valuable. So, people who are non-white are considered to be inherently lesser or "wrong", which is obviously bogus. The issue of modesty level is such a silly one, because who CARES how anyone else chooses to dress? One of my favorite comics shows a woman in a full hijab walking by a woman in a tiny bikini, and both of them feel bad for the other, saying, "What a male-dominated culture."”

Some students mentioned clothing color (5%):

- Asian/Buddhist: “Those who are said to be devoted seem to look more lively and not scared of anything. Those who are said to be oppressed look like they fear something. The touch of white to the devoted woman's headscarf lightens the look and doesn't look scary.”

- Mixed/Christian: “The color they use. Black has negative connotation and Nuns have a positive connotation associated with them...”
- African American/None: “I think it's a matter of the color, or absence there of. Black is so desolate, so when you see women in it, it's as if you are taking all the life from them, where as white seems more pure and acceptable especially with the combination (dark on outskirts with white on inner). The grim reaper is always shown as a figure drowned in black, black in most cultures is bad.”
- Hispanic/Non-religions “...The white bits contrasting with the black probably help a lot though. The other solid black robed thing is the grim reaper. Also trash bags. Maybe people subconsciously associate these things.”
- Indian/Agnostic: “the white color essentially.”

Question 4

Reactions of students:

- White/Catholic: “I am somewhat surprised by the images of these Muslim women and the different activities and roles they play. Media portrays Muslim women as always head to toe in all black, standing next to a man, and silent. I knew this was not quite the case, but the Muslim fashion blogger and activist really surprised me and made me excited for the Muslim culture. Also, it was exciting to see that many of the women didn't wear headdresses. It made it seem like they had more of an option of what they were able to wear and that there is less oppression in the culture that we believe. I was unaware that there were any female Muslim presidents - that is amazing and a great win for not just Muslim women, but women in general.”
- African American/Baptist: I thought they were very informative. I did not know there were muslim presidents, astronauts, and olympians. The media makes it seem as if

Muslims are not capable of doing these great things and labels them as nothing but terrorist.”

- Hispanic/Catholic: “I think that the images I just saw prove the point that Muslim women are as capable to accomplish anything, just like anyone else. I strongly believe that a choice of religion, is not a determinant of future actions. These images are different than what I think I usually seen on the media.”
- Mixed/Catholic: “I think it is great for muslim women to be represented in many different occupations and hobbies. Also the fact that the women all dressed and looked different is helpful for people to realize not all muslim women have to wear a hijab or head covering. I was not surprised because I have muslim friends who do and do not wear their head covering or conservative clothing.”
- Hispanic/Catholic: “More ethnicities than i expected”
- White/Jewish: “Not really surprised, I have friends that are muslim who all have diverse interests and goals so it doesn't surprise me that muslim women inhabit a wide variety of roles. I do think these images are very different from the typical media portrayal of muslims, which seems to be oppressed women in domestic roles, terrorists, or at best very stoic and studious people, but rarely athletic or creative.”
- African American/None: “I am surprised by majority of the images I saw, especially the astronaut. I took a double take, like "What an astronaut?!" The two presidents shocked me as well. So in the media their women are always portrayed without life and kind of desolate or without hope. However, the images I've seen here have shown me that Muslim women can do tremendous things despite the appearance of outside media.”

- Caucasian/Christian: “I am always impressed by women who are very athletic that wear hijabs. I get hot trying to run with barely any clothes on, while these women are so devoted to their faith and passionate about their sport that they overcome the obstacle to pursue what they love. These images are very different than what you see in the media. You generally don't see athletic advertisements featuring Muslim women. It is a lack of exposure to images such as the ones I just saw, positive images of powerful Muslim women, that prevents the eradication of Islam's negative stereotypes.”
- Latina/Christian: “These photographs do the opposite. They show the diversity of expression that occurs. Thus, they really invoke the idea that Islam isn't a limited religion. These women look powerful and fierce. I am surprised pleasantly, and I feel the surprise I see from these images is a cultural problem.”
- Black/Christian: “LOVE IT. I met the muslim fencer at the SXSW obama event.”
- White/Agnostic: “annoyed there were so many; i get it. no, yes”
- Indian/Christian: “These women are not oppressed. The only reason I am surprised is because I have never seen Muslim women portrayed by American media before.”
- Hispanic/None: “I am surprised by them. I don't know a lot about the Muslim religion and pretty much base all of my knowledge about it from images I get in the media. I didn't realize that from what I've gotten from the media, I expected all Muslim women to wear head garb. I think a lot of the reason some people find banning head scarves so easy is because not all Muslims wear them so people that aren't Muslim don't understand their importance.”
- White/None: “I am little surprised. I feel like these women are really accomplished and powerful. However, it does make me question how many muslim women are actually this

successful? I think it would be nice to see some data. I do not think many media websites include muslim women at all.”

Question 5

For those that did think the way a Muslim woman dresses changes their perceptions of her:

- Black/Christian: “If her face is showing she is more inviting and looks more friendly.”
- Asian/Christian: “I would say my perception did change depending on the way each woman was dressed. I imagined women wearing colorful scarves to be "more modern" and black to be "more traditional." For women that were not wearing scarves at all, I just thought "oh she's a Muslim?"”
- Hispanic/Christian: “I would like to say no, but I know that I have been conditioned by society and by my friends to think that it would change my perception. At the surface, there is nothing different, but deep in my heart, I know that I would treat her a little different.”
- Caucasian/Christian: “I would like to say no, but I think I judge most people based on how they dress. If someone is wearing an all black hijab that covers their face, I think I would assume that they are not as friendly as somebody that has their face showing. Although I know that this is a misconception, it has tended to be true in my experience. In the UAE, women who wear a full burka tend to be rude. This has nothing to do with the burka, it is more of a general attitude of UAE nationals. If I saw somebody in Austin wearing a scarf covering her entire face I would mostly be worried that she is over-heated because it's August and it's 100 degrees outside. / As for just a standard hijab, it is not the hijab that changes my perception of a woman. The way a woman incorporates a hijab into her clothing is a representation of her personal style choices. This can be a reflection of

her personality, just as any person's clothing and style choices can be an indication of their personality. For example, the "Muslim activist" looked super hip and I really liked the way she made her head scarf look trendy.”

- White/Jewish: “I do think so a little. I think I perceive women who wear brighter clothes and scarves as happier or more carefree, and women who wear darker colors as more serious. I think I also feel more comfortable around women who where scarves but their face is still showing. Part of it is probably influenced by media portrayals, but I also think it can be disconcerting to not see someones face when you are interacting with them because you cant get as many non-verbal cues as to what they think of you or what they are thinking in general.”
- Mixed/Christian: “Yes, because the face color has embedded connotations already. Black and red are bad, attacking, whereas white and pinks are more friendly.”
- White/Catholic: “The more individual a muslim woman looks, the more comfortable and independent she seems. My perception changes based on how much of her face is covered and what type of covering is used. A covering that is colorful or stylish portrays an attitude of independence. A woman in all black, only showing her eyes, promotes oppression and unrealistic standards.”
- Hispanic/Catholic: “yes, the scarf makes her look sketchy”
- White/Jewish: “Yes, the way a Muslim women dresses can change my perception of her. Scarfs, head dresses, and their face being covered are all very intimidating and can affect how I look at a Muslim woman. If Muslim women didn't have it in their culture to wear these things then I don't think they'd be looked at in a negative light. It's unfortunate that this is however the case.”

- White/None: “Yes, if I can only see her eyes than she looks oppressed, like she has no creative expression over her body or wardrobe”

Those that felt it does not change their perception of the women (38%):

- Hispanic/Christian: “No not at all. I believe that a muslim women should be able to dress any way she likes and however she is comfortable. No matter how she dresses, the perception of her should be the same and should be offered the same opportunities as everyone else.”
- Asian/Christian: “No. Either way they express themselves through fashion is a reflection of their religion.”
- White/None: “It doesn't change my perception, maybe whether or not she looks approachable, but I wouldn't solely judge someone based off of appearance.”
- White/Christian: “Not really. If her face is showing it allows me to know what she looks like so that I can remember her face but I don't judge her character for it.”
- Hispanic/Catholic: “The way a women dresses does not change my perception of them. I think that the color of a scarf or whether her face is showing or not is not different than thinking of a women that wears different lengths of shorts. We don't think about other women's weardrobe choices to change our perception completely, so we shouldn't do it with Muslim women over a headscarf.”

Question 6

Here are some of the comment types for the response to the paragraph:

- Mixed/Christian: “I think that they should be allowed to do whatever they please and wear whatever they please. I also do not think people should be so ignorant about the subject and assume that if someone is wearing a niqab they probably are a terrorist as well. However I will say I just find it strange that woman can be okay with covering all

but their eyes when men don't have to cover anything at all. How is that fair? When did this come about? I'm sorry but if this is about sexuality, I can tell you that women check out men just as often as men check out women. As humans, we are inevitably sexual beings, it is in our nature. But just as I don't think we should judge Muslim women for wearing a particular thing, I find it strange that they feel as though they need to wear a particular thing. These are just my contradicting beliefs, I am not frightened by the niqab, or muslims and I do think it is up to their discretion, I just don;t see why they would choose that.” – *this student assumed that there is no code of modest dress for Muslim men, which is completey inaccurate. Also, in many of these traditional societies men are just as modestly dressed as the women, most wear cultural a long garment that look like a dress known as “dishdashe”, and headdress known as “hatta wa igal”.*

- Latino/Catholic: “I agree! I'll admit that I have my own prejudices based on the way I was brought up.”
- Hispanic/Christian: “While I don't believe that the entire culture stigmatizes to anyone who doesn't conform westernized conventions, I think that anyone should be able to express their faith and culture anywhere, and definitely not judge them based on what they decide that they should or shouldn't wear.”
- Indian/Christian: “I agree with this very much. As a western society we have a set of standards and ideologies that we conform to. Women in different cultures feel different way. Feminism is not the same everywhere therefore we need to be more understanding and accommodating to everyone's beliefs.”
- Mixed/Christian: “I think its hard for Americans to think this open mindedly, especially in Texas where it is so conservative. We are not exposed to that many muslims and we

only react to them by what we know of them from what we hear in the news. I'm not saying it's right, and I don't think people should be this judgmental and ignorant, but it does happen frequently, sadly."

Question 7

Example reflection to the "Male-Dominated" cartoon:

- Latina/Christian: "This image shows the judgement between two groups of women that perpetuate male control over women. The woman in the bikini is automatically assuming the woman in a hijab is in one because of men and not her own preference, the Muslim women thinks the woman in a bikini is in one because men like to see women undress. Both of them are off in that their judgements give men power"
- White/Christian: "I think that just as Americans have exerted their opinions about Muslims and their traditions publicly, it is perfectly okay for them to publicly exert their opinions about the way we do things."
- White/Christian: "I think it's very true. We value men's opinions too much on how we look and act."
- Mixed/Christian: "I think the white woman is being sexualized for her body in the sense of male domination in her culture. Where as the muslim women are dominated by men for their rights to have freedom of expression and how they choose to present themselves."
- Indian/Jain: "It goes back to what i said earlier about how i hate cable news and the pandering people to the least common mass of uneducated white males."
- Hispanic/Christian: "I think this reaction is accurate, and how everything is based on perception. Depending on the culture and religion you were raised on, you look at

different cultures differently than they look on themselves. Therefore when looking at this, an American woman would think that them being covered causes them to be oppressed, while a Muslim woman thinks that her being declothed is a sign of being oppressed by men.”

- Hispanic/None: “I think both women in the cartoon have a valid way of thinking and it all depends on their points of view. In American culture, there's a growing movement of self love, body acceptance, and self expression so in a way, the woman in the bikini could be seen as embracing herself and her body. At the same time, however, this could be seen as a way of catering to men and their sexual desires, objectifying the female body. In Muslim culture, modesty is highly valued and encouraged in women as a way of showing respect. However, this may limit the ways in which a woman may dress or express herself simply because the belief is that her body is only for her husband to enjoy, not necessarily herself.”
- White/None: “Never thought about it like this. I feel in America mainly women are very sexualized. However, I like to think women don't dress a certain way to appease to men. I think we dress the way we do because we want and our own beliefs. I don't think men are telling women you have to be in a bikini or you have to cover everything except your eyes. I feel as if culture plays a more significant role than men.”
- White/Jewish: “Love this cartoon! I've seen it shared a lot on social media. I think it really succinctly describes the problem with making assumptions about cultures you know nothing about while failing to see how your culture could be interpreted as wrong or oppressive given a certain context.”

- Asian/None: “This is the exact comic I was talking about before!! This comic really demonstrates the power of perspective; though each woman IS affected by male-dominated culture, it was their choice to put on the clothes they did. A woman in a bikini and a woman in a burka can both feel beautiful, or sexy, or uncomfortable, or oppressed. Everyone has their own experience, so evaluating someone else's choices based on just your own experience is extremely limiting and closed-minded. What SHOULD happen is more communication between people who are different - it can be really eye opening and exciting to share stories and experiences from very different backgrounds. It shows you that no matter where a person comes from or what they believe in, we're all human, and we all share that connection.”
- White/Christian: “Maybe it is a part of the Muslim culture that men find women's eyes to be the most beautiful part of their body, and may be the reason why they want nothing else to show except what is most beautiful. While in America it is common for men to focus more on the body of a woman then what is inside or what's more meaningful such as a woman's eyes.”

Question 8

Example responses:

- White/Christian: “These photos just go to show how Western culture believes that it is so far advanced and progressive when in fact there was a long process to get where we are now. It is okay that other countries do things differently than that of Western culture and I think that we as a country need to understand that. We have no right to dictate what they do and vice versa.”
- Indian/Hindu: “i have known previously that islam comes from deep and rich texts and art and that is something great about the religion”

- White/Agnostic: “Propaganda, both of these stock stories, stigmatize cultures and conceal events that have occurred. Focusing our attention on a single circumstance to support a very broad claim.”
- White/Christian: “Clearly Islamic women were encouraged to learn and get an education before American women were, which comes as a huge shock to me.”
- White/Catholic: “I believe that the level of education for women in Islam rivals or surpasses that of other religions. It is radical Islamists that believe women should be oppressed, and I think that the world needs to recognize a distinction in the different sectors of the religion. Clearly not all Islamic women are oppressed, but the ones who are cause the western world to be concerned and not open to accepting modest ways of dress or behavior that Islamic people express.”
- Latina/Christian: “It shows similar historical struggles and that powerful women aren't just western women, educated women aren't just western”
- Mixed/Christian: “The laws of islam has changed going progressive and regressive, back and forth. There was a time when the west was regressive and oppressive of women and education, and when muslim women were free to gain an education. Now the roles have flipped.”
- Asian/Christian: “this picture is twisted and wired to make women in america seem more oppressed than muslims. the intelligence of the khilafah has nothing to do with her religion, but of her own brain. the american religion plays no role in intellectual success. you are connecting apples and oranges.”

- White/Jewish: “really cool- however I will say that in certain places where islamic fundamentalist groups have power, women and girls are denied education. there are also plenty of non-muslim societies where women are still unable to get an education.”
- Hispanic/Catholic: “The image above shows that contrary to popular belief, women in Islam society have been respected for a very long time for their education. Whereas women in western societies have been thought of as housewives and not capable of obtaining an education.”
- White/Christian: “Women's education in Islam is not as peaceful as it is shown in that picture.”
- White/Agnostic: “its not 841 anymore and i think things have regressed (but idk much about things over there if im honest). also not 1821 anymore. and i think things have gotten better in the west”
- Black/None: “I think that the information is interesting information indeed which directly goes against what we are taught by the media, the usually presents it as if the Americas are so high and noble on their education purposes. I would like to know, when women were accepted as equal workers in the two areas. I mean even in america I don't think women are equal, so I just don't know how to feel honestly, there is just so much inequality.”
- Mexican/Agnostic: “It makes me sad to think that there was a point not too long ago where women in US could not go to a university. I appreciate science and education, so I don't think that gender or religion should keep a person from learning. I respect Fatima for her amazing work.”

- White/None: “Westerners are sexist. This isn't news to me. I'm not surprised that i'm surprised by the information provided. Seems like the western world puts more oppressive standards on their women.”

Appendix F: Survey Feedback

Example responses to: “Did you feel uncomfortable answering survey questions about Muslim women or Muslims in general?”

- “Lack of knowledge”
- “general discomfort, wanted to give my honest opinons and thoughts and showed how i still have bias in my thinking even when i say i do not”
- “it's a politically fueled conversation, and I think as always, it depends entirely on how you were raised and what sort of experiences you had. I feel like I'm pretty knowledgeable on the subject, simply because that's whats sort of required today, however I don't think my opinion matters.”
- “JUst discomfort of the topic in general its just awkward.”
- “Media has made it uncomfortable”

Positive feedback:

- “Well done survey, very thorough”
- “Great survey! I felt very engaged with the photographs and the video!”
- “I feel as though I learned a lot from this survey and gained a new perspective on muslim women and their attire.”
- “I feel very enlightened on a subject I had no previous information on. I will now be conscious enough to make an effort to not feel uncomfortable around women wearing hijabs, it is simply their faith; indeterminate of their personalities.”
- “I learned so much! I honestly internalized my own biases and became aware of how harmful they can be.”

- “I really liked this survey! It was super extensive and made me really think!”
- “It was interesting and not your usual survey. I liked it.”
- “I think the survey was very informative!”

Negative feedback (there were 5, below are all of them):

- “This survey i feel was very stereotypical, which looks for stereotypical responses, i think each women is beautiful in their own way. I think there are good and bad people in all religions, and non-religions. i feel like this survey was intended to get a certain reaction from the people taking it”
- “misleading survey / / and very negative questions about muslims”
- “too many repeat questions it felt like. the questions at the beginning asked facts. i cant agree or disagree with facts -- survery 101”
- “Kind of long and aggravating.”
- “I feel like this survey was a bit biased.. the questions seemed to be directed at pushing the interviewee to answer a certain way. This survey did not seem to provide an accurate depiction of the negative side of the effect of Islamic women and the idea of wearing the hijab”

Critical feedback:

- “It seems as though many questions on this survey requires the person taking the survey to have be fairly knowledgeable in the current and past issues of Islam, as well as many of the teachings and interpretations of the Quran, which I personally do not have.”
- “I think the survey was interesting to partake in, however some questions, like what you think about your persons education, i don't think should be included, because no matter how someone looks you cant determine level of education based on that.”

- “We should be given more information about the studies than we were to be more accurate with answering.”
- “There were a lot of short answer responses.”

Thoughts in feedback:

- “I try to be as open minded as I can about women of different religions. But I think even with women who are christians and are forced to dress conservatively and live life in a particularly way like mormons, is very oppressive. I don't think it's fair to point at one religion to have all of these flaws because all religions are sexist and male dominated. “
- “I learned that Islamic women are not necessarily as oppressed as I thought they were.”
- “Everyone should be treated individually, however, safety first.”
- “I think the fact that there is a survey about this because it has become such a controversial problem is absurd. Peoples religion does not define them. I can think of 100+ terrible Christians, Jewish people, Mormons, Catholics, you name it. Ones that break the law and do drugs and things they should not be doing and that does not adhere to their religious values and that is for one simple reason: your religion does not define you. Religion is something to believe in, it is hope-- not the platform of life for every single one of its followers. People are bad because of internal factors, not their religion, race, language they speak, the way they dress, whatever the case may be, none of that outside stuff matters.”
- “I think it helps to realize the lack of information one can have of other cultures.”

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Vita

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